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Monday 10 April 2017

Speaker
Honourable Dave Levac

Clerk
Todd Decker

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Deuxième session, 41^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 10 avril 2017

Président
L'honorable Dave Levac

Greffier
Todd Decker



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

Monday 10 April 2017

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

Lundi 10 avril 2017

The House met at 1030.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Good morning. Please join me in prayer.

Prayers.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Todd Smith: I'd like to welcome a couple of constituents from my riding: a former Moira Secondary School teacher, Leslie Lewis, who is here with us today, and her 13-year-old grandson Cameron who attends Queen Elizabeth school in Belleville. They also happen to be related to the member from Beaches-East York. We welcome them to the Legislature this morning.

Hon. Michael Chan: I would like to welcome the family of page captain Eashvar Sukumar from my riding of Markham-Unionville: his father Sukumar, his mother Anjula, his sister Sitha and his uncles Balakumar and Selvakumar. Welcome to Queen's Park.

Hon. Chris Ballard: I'd like to introduce a number of important people to the House today from my constituency. We have Trish Palichuk, Rohit Singh, Jenny Duffy and new to my Queen's Park staff, Samantha Challoner. Welcome.

Mr. Arthur Potts: It does give me great pleasure to introduce my cousin Leslie Shuter Lewis to the House. She repeatedly reminds the member from Prince Edward-Hastings to be nice to me. She's also here with her son Cory Lewis and her grandson Cameron Mercier. Her father, Lieutenant Colonel Edwin Shuter, penned the poem The Canadian Volunteer that I read last Remembrance Day. I'm glad to have them all here today.

Hon. Bill Mauro: I'm pleased to introduce this morning, from the riding of Thunder Bay-Superior North, family and friends of page Frances MacGregor who are here, I'm quite certain, somewhere: William MacGregor, Nancy Lorimer, Harry Walker, Anne Walker, mother Daphne Mitchell, father Bill MacGregor—who I've already introduced. I would just like to welcome them to Queen's Park, as well as great uncle Harry Walker—I think I got him once as well.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'd like to welcome to Queen's Park Mary Ann Comfort and Stan Comfort who are here today spending their day with their favourite MPP from Niagara Falls.

Mr. Grant Crack: On behalf of my colleague the MPP for Etobicoke-Lakeshore, I'd like to welcome, as a guest of page Zara Trainor, her mother, Kyra Trainor. She's in the public gallery with us today. Welcome.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Today we have with us in the Speaker's gallery a delegation from the

Parliament of the Federation Wallonia-Brussels, in Belgium. They are led by Speaker Philippe Courard. Bonjour. Bienvenue.

The member from Nepean-Carleton on a point of order.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: Thank you very much, Speaker. I have a very important point of order. On the past weekend my Ottawa Senators clinched the Stanley Cup playoffs. They will begin playing this Wednesday.

I'd also like to give a profound and heartfelt warm welcome to the Toronto Maple Leafs for finally, in this century, getting to the playoffs.

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICER

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I'm neutral.

On a serious but good note, I'd like to inform the House that, effective today, following a successful convalescence, the Financial Accountability Officer, Stephen LeClair, has resumed his duties.

I also would like to say, on behalf of the entire House, I want to thank Integrity Commissioner David Wake for agreeing to act as temporary Financial Accountability Officer during Mr. LeClair's absence. Thank you to Judge Wake.

It is time for question period.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HOUSING POLICY

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Housing. I've heard from many young families about their dream of buying their first home, only to be outbid time and time again. Why has the dream of home ownership become so much more difficult? It's because of this government's burdensome regulation and red tape. The supply of houses doesn't meet the demand. In fact, if no new houses went on the market after today, the supply would be gone in one month.

Mr. Speaker, it's time the government gets out their scissors and truly starts cutting red tape. Will the Liberals commit to slashing red tape and letting the housing market meet the demand?

Hon. Chris Ballard: Thank you to the member opposite for that question. As we've stated repeatedly in the House, we really understand the concerns throughout the GTHA regarding the booming housing market. We know that Ontarians are worried about homes. They want the

peace of mind knowing that they'll all have an affordable place to call home.

I can say that we have been working and consulting across this province, and in fact across Canada, looking at solutions that we can use in Ontario. Some of those will be coming soon, Mr. Speaker.

We've been participating alongside BC and the cities of Toronto and Vancouver in a federal working group to look at housing. We have been looking at the Residential Tenancies Act. We've been consulting extensively across Ontario over the past few weeks. We're on it.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: Mr. Speaker, this morning I was joined by Juan Rojas, who is in the gallery with his wife today. Juan, his wife and their three-year-old daughter are looking to move to a bigger house for their growing family. They've been looking for months in Etobicoke and base their bids on the housing prices they saw the week before. They bid last week's price today and they didn't get it. It never seems to be enough.

Mr. Speaker, can the Liberals tell Juan why they are making it harder for him to buy a house for his young family?

Hon. Chris Ballard: It's a very interesting question coming from the member opposite. I will tell you that the former Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Tim Hudak, recently said that he congratulated the government for taking positive steps to address affordability. We agree, Mr. Speaker.

1040

Let me just reiterate a few of the things that this government has done. We're continuing to work with our municipal partners to make secondary suites—those are the self-contained residential units—available more quickly, helping communities better respond quickly to renters' needs.

We recently passed legislation that empowers communities to use a new tool called inclusionary zoning.

Mr. Speaker, we have a whole host of things we've done, and I look forward to explaining more.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Mr. Ernie Hardeman: The government significantly increased municipal review times for planning applications. They raised it from 90 days to 180 days for amendments to the official plans and subdivision and condominium approvals, from 90 days to 120 days for zoning and holding bylaws, and from 60 days to 90 days for consent applications, all of which make it harder to get foundations dug, walls put up and roofs over the heads of our young families.

The dream of home ownership should be attainable for most young families. Why does the government insist on making it so much harder for the majority of families?

Hon. Chris Ballard: Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Bill Mauro: I want to thank the member for the question. There is an interesting narrative, I think, that is beginning to take hold in the GTHA around housing

affordability. We understand very clearly that this is a real issue.

What I do want to say is that, from our perspective in our ministry, we have been doing a significant amount of work on this file already. I would say that we feel comfortable in discounting the following from being in any way influencing the price of housing in the GTHA.

Number one is land availability. There is absolutely enough land available in the province of Ontario and in the GTHA to meet demand.

Number two, there is absolutely enough serviced land available to meet demand. It is a mandated three-year supply required. We've done a deep dive and, in fact, there is a three-year supply of serviced land available.

We continue to work further on this to see if approvals are part of what's holding it up—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

Ms. Laurie Scott: My question is to the Minister of the Status of Women. There is a sexual assault centre in Brampton. It currently has 132 people on the waiting list, and it takes nine months for survivors to get their first session. That wait is about to get longer: Staff hours are being cut and the centre is closing on Fridays.

Does the Minister of the Status of Women believe that this is acceptable?

Hon. Indira Naidoo-Harris: I'm pleased to rise and talk to the member opposite about this important question. Absolutely, sexual violence has a devastating impact on the lives of survivors and their families, and it's far too prevalent in our society. It's absolutely unacceptable. That's why, through the sexual violence and harassment action plan, we're addressing awareness, we're raising awareness, we're improving supports and we're making workplaces and campuses safer.

We know that Hope 24/7 does important work throughout Peel region, which is why we have provided them funding for sexual violence and harassment prevention over the last 20 years. In fact, of the 42 sexual assault centres in the province, they now receive the sixth-highest funding allocation of any of the centres in the province. I think that's amazing.

Now, I understand that their model of delivery is different. We are working with them to ensure that they are on track.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary question.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Jaipaul Massey-Singh, the president of the Hope 24/7 board, had this to say: "Unless (the province) is prepared to step up in a meaningful way we are really in a situation where we are going to fail our community."

Is the government prepared to step up in a meaningful way, or will the Liberals fail sexual assault survivors in Peel region?

Hon. Indira Naidoo-Harris: Attorney General.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: This is a very important question. This is an issue that this government and our Premier have taken a tremendous amount of leadership on. Our Premier is the one who stood up to make sure that we deal with issues around sexual violence and sexual harassment in a meaningful way—not to just pay platitudes, but to actually take action—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, please.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Thank you, Speaker—to take action that is going to ensure that there are supports available for victims of sexual violence or harassment, to ensure that we change attitudes when it comes to sexual violence and harassment through our It's Never Okay campaign. We are making a meaningful and substantive difference. In my supplementary, I will speak to the kinds of supports we have available.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Final supplementary.

Ms. Laurie Scott: Hope 24/7 has the second-lowest funding per capita of all sexual assault centres in the province, yet the government's tone-deaf response to this crisis in Peel has been that they've funded this centre for 20 years. But what good is this funding if it doesn't meet the needs on the ground?

I know the government doesn't believe in mandatory sexual assault training for judges, but now it seems like they're not prepared to help the most vulnerable victims of sexual assault.

Mr. Speaker, once again, will the government respond to the cry for help from sexual assault survivors in Peel region?

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: Hope 24/7 does important work throughout Peel region, but I think it's also really important to note the kind of support we have been providing to this very important agency. Since 2003, our funding for all sexual assault centre programs has increased by 45%.

In 2015, we increased Hope 24/7's budget by over \$31,000 as part of our It's Never Okay action plan to increase funding to all sexual assault centres by 7%. Hope 24/7 currently receives almost \$500,000, the sixth-highest funding allocation in all of Ontario. We have committed to reviewing counselling services—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Dufferin–Caledon will come to order. Thank you.

Finish, please. Wrap up.

Hon. Yasir Naqvi: We have committed to reviewing counselling services across the province, and we've asked Hope 24/7 to be part of this conversation. This is important work and we will get it done together.

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Mr. Peter Tabuns: My question to the Acting Premier: People living on the minimum wage will see their paycheques increase by 1.7% this year under the Pre-

mier's pegged-to-inflation minimum wage. However, if you happen to be the CEO of Hydro One, you'll have seen your salary go up by 500%. The people who need the raise the least are getting the most, and the people who are struggling are getting the least. Does the Acting Premier see anything wrong with that?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Economic Development and Growth, come to order. Minister of Finance.

Hon. Charles Sousa: In Ontario, we've had the largest job growth in the past 10 years. We now have more people working in the private sector than ever before. These are high-paying jobs, good-paying jobs. Many of the workers that the member makes reference to in a relative number of sectors in our economy are now receiving more than they ever have before.

Mr. Speaker, it was this Minister of Labour—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Finish, Minister.

Hon. Charles Sousa: Mr. Speaker, it was this Minister of Labour, within this caucus, who put forward an index on wages. Now, minimum wage is forever going to be increased as a function of CPI, something that that side did not support and wasn't even part of their official plans.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Okay, so you're fine with that. Let's go on to the next question.

It's not just the million-dollar raises that are unfair. After 14 years of letting hydro rates reach a crisis point, the Premier promised relief, but she didn't mean for everyone. Their plan doesn't apply to hospitals, large businesses or even municipalities. Why is the Premier only interested in helping some people, not everyone?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Ontario's prosperity, its growth, has increased. We're now leading Canada. We lead the G7. We're taking a number of steps to diversify our economy so as not to be reliant on anyone or any one commodity to ensure we advance in the new-age economy. That's high-paying jobs, good-paying jobs, stable jobs.

The member opposite seems to want to go back to the days of assembly lines and smokestacks. We can't compete in low wages, which he's trying to propose, that we're losing to other economies around the world.

We are going to support our young people, we're going to invest in our young people, we're going to invest in jobs, and we're going to invest in positions that create those jobs—unlike that member, who wants to increase our taxes and push them away.

Interjections.

1050

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary.

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Again to the Acting Premier: The Premier's priorities don't make sense. She rubber-stamps multi-million-dollar raises for Hydro executives who don't need them and leaves people living on the min-

imum wage, struggling. She's promising hydro relief, but schools and hospitals could actually see their hydro delivery charges increase under her privatized Hydro One.

She could take a step toward ending the runaway Hydro salaries and runaway bills by stopping the sell-off of Hydro One. Will she do that?

Hon. Charles Sousa: We're balancing the books so that we can afford to pay for and invest more in education. We're balancing the books so that we can invest more in hospitals. We're balancing the books so we can invest more in our young people, so we can create those jobs. We're balancing the books so we can ensure that businesses invest and come to Ontario—and they are, Mr. Speaker. They're creating jobs, good-paying jobs.

Stop talking down Ontario and the people of Ontario who are delivering for our province.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock. Be seated, please. Start the clock.

New question.

TENANT PROTECTION

Mr. Peter Tabuns: This weekend, I received a letter from a senior named Clarence Bax. Mr. Bax lives in Sault Ste. Marie. He and 31 of his friends and neighbours are facing a 31% increase in their rent.

Does the Acting Premier think it's fair that a senior like Clarence, living on a fixed income, should be subject to a drastic increase in his rent at the drop of his landlord's hat?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Minister of Housing.

Hon. Chris Ballard: Thank you to the NDP for that question. Speaker, it's absolutely unacceptable that so many Ontarian tenants are faced with housing costs that are rising so dramatically. That's why we're already developing a plan to address unfair rises in rental costs right across Ontario. In the coming weeks, we're going to be rolling out our plan for substantive rent control right here in Ontario. It's going to be a very broad package of changes that will protect tenants. We've been working on legislation since last June. It's important that we get it right.

As I said in a previous response, we've already taken a whole host of things in regard to action. We've introduced secondary suite legislation. We have introduced inclusionary zoning. We've frozen municipal property tax on apartments. We have doubled the maximum refund for first-time homebuyers.

We're continuing to collect data to better understand housing needs right here in Ontario, and we're working with—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: Again to the Acting Premier: "We are all senior citizens living on a fixed income and are faced with the problem of where the funds will be coming from to pay this substantial rent increase," Mr. Bax wrote in a letter that he sent to Premier Wynne.

Last week, the Premier and her Liberal Party voted against my bill which would have closed that loophole now that allows these devastating rent increases. Will she change her mind now? Will the government change its mind?

Hon. Chris Ballard: As I said before, I outlined a whole host of things that this government has already put in place. I've talked repeatedly about the broad package of change that we're going to be moving ahead with in the days and weeks ahead, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier and I both have been exceptionally clear that we're moving forward with a plan to address unfair increases in rental costs. The NDP know that, Speaker. The NDP know that. We appreciate that they are on the same page when it comes to helping families who are feeling the pinch, but our plan will go further. It will address a whole host of issues around tenant rights. Simply addressing a removal of the rental cap is a good start; our plan will do that and it will do more.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Final supplementary?

Mr. Peter Tabuns: If you want to be on the same page, act now. Pass it now.

These seniors need the Premier to act, and they tell her so in their letter. "We are asking you to support Mr. Tabuns' Bill 106 which would eliminate the dramatic rent increase we and 150,000 Ontarians are facing," they said.

Will the Premier put aside partisanship, put the interests of Mr. Bax, his friends and thousands of other Ontarians who are facing unfair rent increases first, and agree to pass my bill today?

Hon. Chris Ballard: You know, Speaker, what the NDP put on the table in that private member's bill was pretty thin gruel when it comes to addressing the needs of Ontario renters. It's, dare I say, a one-trick pony.

I will say again, what we're bringing forward in the coming days and weeks ahead will be a more robust rent control, more robust legislation regarding the rental tenancy act. We heard time and again as we travelled across Ontario what is bothering tenants and some of the issues facing landlords. Our changes are going to address a whole host of those things.

It's wonderful to hear the NDP standing up for seniors, but I want to—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Hamilton East-Stoney Creek, come to order.

Wrap-up sentence.

Hon. Chris Ballard: The NDP didn't even mention the word "poverty" in their last election platform.

PAY EQUITY

Ms. Laurie Scott: To the Minister of Labour: On March 8, International Women's Day, I met with Ontario's long-time commissioner for pay equity and had the opportunity to review the 2015-16 statistics for the pay equity office.

While the pay equity office does what it can to support women, it still lacks the tools and resources it needs to fulfil its mandate. As usual, this government loves to talk about equality, but when it comes to actually getting to the work that needs to be done, they are missing in action.

The government has yet to act on the Gender Wage Gap Steering Committee's final report, which was published almost a year ago, in May 2016. Why has it taken the government and the minister so long to convene a working group to review the well-thought-out recommendations made by the expert committee?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you to the member for that very important question. We know the gender wage gap still disadvantages women right across Ontario and throughout every jurisdiction within Ontario.

The conversation that was started a while ago led to the creation of a working group. They came forward with some recommendations. We didn't wait; we implemented those things that we could implement immediately.

Gender-based analysis now is required. Any time any policy goes through this government, it gets put through a gender lens. We've been providing employers in this province—very progressive employers—with the resources that they need, training materials on anti-discrimination and developing other educational products.

The task force is meeting. April 13 is its first meeting. I'm expecting some pretty good recommendations out of that group. I look forward to the work of the people. We're determined to close this gap.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Laurie Scott: Back to the minister: Not only has it taken this government more than six months to even notice the report; they have now decided to convene an invite-only, closed-door session to discuss how to close the gender wage gap. Why not bring this discussion to this Legislature? These are important issues that should be discussed publicly and not behind closed doors.

I remind the minister that when the Pay Equity Act was adopted in this House in 1987, it was passed unanimously with the support of all three parties. It's time for this government to do what's right for women. I call on the government to work with all parties in this Legislature and establish a special legislative committee to sit this summer, to work on strengthening the Pay Equity Act.

1100

Can I expect the minister's support for this kind of non-partisan initiative to improve the lives of hard-working women in Ontario, or will the government revert—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you for the supplementary. Again, we're determined to build on the progress we've already made. Everybody knows that we need—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Niagara West—Glanbrook, come to order.

Finish, please.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: All members of this House, I think, share the feeling that we need to do better on this, that we need to close the gap. It's not just confined to that side of the House.

But I'll tell you, Speaker, when I hear the member opposite demean and denigrate and dismiss the people who are putting the hard work into this, the people we've appointed to the task force—we've got organized labour, we've got business, we've got advocates, we've got equal pay advocates coming forward—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member knows how to address a member in the House too.

Wrap up.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: The member needs to pay a bit more respect to those people who are working hard on that issue. It's not just this side of the House, that side of the House. It's the women who have stepped forward to serve on this working group who are going to help us—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Stop the clock.

New question.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Wayne Gates: My question is to the Acting Premier. I stood up in this House many times before to try and explain to you what your hydro crisis is doing to Ontario.

Manor Cleaners has 30 employees, with locations in Niagara Falls and St. Catharines. They're another example of a business struggling to afford their hydro rates. Their hydro bills in 2017 have doubled. They tell me that dry cleaners across Ontario can't raise their prices fast enough to keep up with their hydro bills. And if they do, they can't hold on to their customers, who are struggling to pay their own hydro bills.

My question to the Acting Premier: Will the government commit today to make real changes to our hydro system, to ensure that businesses in Ontario have the ability to stay open and, equally important, keep their workers employed?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Minister of Energy and hydro cuts.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: Thank you to the member for—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The minister knows better. Withdraw that, please.

Hon. Charles Sousa: I withdraw.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: I'm very pleased to stand and rise and talk about how Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan is going to help 500,000 small businesses and farms right across the province.

Not knowing the specifics of the business that the honourable member mentioned, if they're a general-service business, as the 500,000 businesses right across the province are, they'll be receiving a 25% rate reduction. That is significant for small businesses right across the province.

I know we've been working with the Minister of Economic Development and Growth to also continue to have a very prosperous business climate in this province, and that's something that we're going to continue to see here in this province. Our businesses are going to grow, hire more people and create more jobs, and that's something we should all be proud of.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Wayne Gates: Mr. Speaker, I can tell you, to the minister—both ministers—that Manor Cleaners called me; I didn't call them about their hydro bill. It's absolutely disgusting that the minister would stand up and laugh at a question I'm asking about hydro when hydro in this province is a crisis. Make no mistake about it: It's disgusting and shameful that you do that. I didn't call the employer; they called me. There's a real and serious problem in the hydro system in this province.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Economic Development and Growth, second time.

Mr. Wayne Gates: After setting the building on fire, this government wants to hand business a pail of water to put out the flames. It's not putting out the fire, and it's not stopping the closures of businesses right across the province of Ontario.

I ask the Acting Premier again, will you commit to take immediate action to help small businesses in Ontario with their crushing hydro bills by stopping the sale of Hydro One and taking real action to lower hydro bills?

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Beaches–East York, come to order.

Minister of Energy.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: I'm pleased once again to be able to rise and stand and talk about how all businesses will be getting a 25% reduction when we bring forward Ontario's Fair Hydro Plan. That is actually relief that is coming for businesses right across the province, unlike that party that puts forward a plan that's pie-in-the-sky. Many of their proposals rely on vague, yet-to-be-determined expert panels to be convened sometime in the future.

I know the PCs don't even have time to think about a plan. But, on that side of the House, they have no idea on how to deal with it. This expert panel of theirs, with the NDP: Have they heard back from anything yet? They have not. Let's be honest, Mr. Speaker; the feds aren't even returning their calls. Maybe that's why they're sending out the member from Bramalea–Gore–Malton to go to Ottawa.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Order. One wrap-up sentence.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: To see action to help small businesses, you look to this government. To see no action, look at the other side.

NORTHERN ONTARIO DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: My question this morning is to the Minister of Northern Development and Mines. I know that our government strongly supports communities and businesses in northern Ontario. We recognize that through strategic investment, northern Ontario is on the right track to prosperity. Investing in the north is a critical part of this government's plan to build Ontario up by supporting job creation and creating a dynamic and innovative business climate.

I understand that through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corp., our government does exactly that. Mr. Speaker, can the minister please tell us more about supporting job creation in the north and the work of the NOHFC?

Hon. Bill Mauro: In the late 1980s, the David Peterson Liberal government put in place this fund, a flagship program for northern Ontario called the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund. It has served northern Ontario very well for almost 30 years now.

Speaker, what I like to remind people about with this particular fund is that, in 2008, as the recession had taken hold—and in northern Ontario, we had already felt the effects of that in 2005–06 when forestry was affected even before the main recession—we made a decision not to scale back when the recession took hold, but to actually increase funding in this program.

Historically, it was at \$60 million a year. We took it from \$60 million to \$70 million, from \$70 million to \$80 million and from \$80 million to \$90 million. Now that fund sits at \$100 million every year and has continued to enhance and facilitate economic development in northern Ontario ever since then.

It's a great program, Speaker. We're very committed to it and we've increased the funding level by \$40 million.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you, Minister—

Mr. Gilles Bisson: Wow, Minister, that was a great answer.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Timmins–James Bay will come to order.

Supplementary.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: Thank you, Minister, for setting the record straight in this House. I know that northern Ontario is the top priority for our government, and it's clear that the investments made through the NOHFC are having a direct impact on universities, communities and businesses in the north.

Investing in universities and colleges benefits everyone by creating jobs, enriching society and stimulating culture. Can the minister please speak to other investments made specifically at colleges and universities in the north?

Hon. Bill Mauro: Thank you again to the member for the question. We recognize that in northern Ontario, our colleges and universities have capacity to grow and to help our northern economies ride out the cyclical nature of many of the economies of many of our communities. One of the things that we've been doing through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund is to invest in research, innovation and knowledge-based jobs that help our smaller communities ride out the cyclical nature of our economy.

Just last week or two weeks ago, I was at Lakehead University for a \$5-million announcement on the Centre for Advanced Studies in Engineering and Sciences, a major project that will create over 67 jobs over about five years. Very soon, we'll be at Confederation College in Thunder Bay for the ribbon-cutting on their new technology hub, which will prepare students very well for the jobs in the future.

It's very focused, some of the programs in NOHFC, to help us ride out and change our economies in northern Ontario.

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CHILD PROTECTION

Mrs. Gila Martow: My question is to the Minister of Children and Youth Services. We've had three days of hearings into Bill 89, which is looking to overhaul our child welfare system for the first time in over three decades. I've attempted five times to put forward a motion in order for the committee on justice policy to formally request that the minister present himself at the committee. I'm sure the NDP member from Hamilton Mountain can vouch for me, since she agreed she'd like to hear from the minister as well.

Would the minister please explain why his colleagues on the justice policy committee are blocking the committee from inviting him to speak?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I'd be happy to take a question here today on this bill. The legislation is a very comprehensive piece of legislation that I believe will give young people the best start to life they can possibly have. We know that here, in the province of Ontario, we want to make sure young people can transition into adulthood and find success in the province. We also need to make sure that young people get the services that they need when they need them.

This piece of comprehensive legislation—I'm very proud that it's being debated here in the Legislature and proud that it went to committee for the three days—is something that I believe will be a big game changer here in the province of Ontario. In my supplement, I will talk about some of the highlights from that proposed legislation.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Gila Martow: There were five attempts, and I even tried to set up a phone call with the minister. After three days of hearings, many questions were raised, questions only the minister can answer. For example, our

indigenous communities are expected to join the integrated child welfare data system known as CPIN, yet they have not been told how this will be possible without the proper Internet infrastructure in these communities.

I'm baffled as to why the minister responsible for child welfare would not want to address the concerns raised at the hearings. For a government that claims to be open and transparent, why in this case does the minister refuse to be accountable to the elected members of the justice policy committee?

Hon. Michael Coteau: The member knows that in the Westminster system the member has an opportunity to ask questions here in question period. That's why we call it question period. You can ask any question you want during that time period. We have an hour, Monday to Thursday, where members can stand up and ask members in the Legislature questions. I'm so proud of this piece of legislation. It—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I will remind the member opposite and all the members opposite that this is their opportunity. If they have questions, we have something called question period, and we're here today. Use the opportunity to ask questions, and any member, any—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member is not helping me.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Member from Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke.

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Infrastructure.

New question.

LONG-TERM CARE

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: My question is to the Acting Premier. Today we see more and more evidence that this Liberal government has driven long-term care to the breaking point. CARP, which represents 300,000 older Canadians, polled its members and found deep dissatisfaction with long-term-care facilities. Seniors are not happy with long-term care today. They are worried about their loved ones. They have little confidence in oversight and they see that staff are overworked and just don't have the supports they need.

After 14 years in power, after 14 years to improve long-term care, after 14 years of inaction, when will this Liberal government finally admit it has spent 14 years failing Ontario's seniors?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I appreciate the question. There's nothing more important to us as a government and a health care system than providing a safe, secure and compassionate environment for our seniors wherever they reside, including in long-term-care homes. That's why, since coming into office, we have almost doubled our

funding for long-term care from \$2 billion to more than \$4 billion today.

We've also invested in health care personnel. Since 2008, in the last decade, we have added 4,600 new staff into our long-term-care homes, and that includes more than 2,000 nurses. We've built more than 10,000 new long-term-care beds. We are in the process of redeveloping 30,000 new ones. In fact, we're almost halfway toward that target already. We're investing in behavioural supports because we recognize the higher prevalence of dementia.

We're making all those investments for that precise reason: to have the best quality care.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: Seniors want to see big improvements in long-term care, not more excuses from this Liberal government. Wanda Morris, the vice-president of CARP, says that these findings should be a wake-up call for this minister.

Seniors have little faith in the oversight of long-term care, and they want standards of decency and care to protect every resident. Yet this Liberal government refuses to back the NDP's call for minimum standards of care.

Why is this government refusing to listen to seniors and refusing to do the right thing to protect the safety and the dignity of every long-term-care resident in Ontario?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, we require long-term-care homes to develop a staffing plan that is specific and reflects the unique characteristics and needs of the population they serve. We think, rather than an arbitrary minimum number of hours or staffing, which in fact was investigated by Shirlee Sharkey several years ago—and she did not advocate for that approach—she felt, and others have felt to this day, that it's most appropriate to recognize that long-term-care homes in one part of the province may have a completely different population than in another part of the province. Some arbitrary staffing number is not nearly as helpful or important as ensuring the development—which they're required to do by law—and the implementation of a human resources plan that reflects the needs of those patients who reside in that residence.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM FUNDING

Mr. Arthur Potts: My question today is to the Minister of Infrastructure. Our government recognizes that making smart investments in public infrastructure is one of the best ways to stimulate growth in our economy, create jobs and enhance quality of life. For decades, previous governments, including both opposition parties, have failed to keep our infrastructure up to date.

We want people in every corner of the province to share in the stronger communities that we are building, whether they live in big cities or small towns. I am so proud to be a member of a government that is investing directly in communities through programs like the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund, which supports priority projects in ridings across the province.

I know that our government is making an exciting announcement today regarding this year's OCIF funding. Speaker, through you to the minister, will he share the details of today's announcement with the House?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: My thanks to the member from Beaches—East York. Yes, our government created the \$100-million OCIF fund to provide all communities in Ontario with a population of 100,000 or less with funding for critical projects. Every eligible municipality's allocation is reliable, formula-based funding, but they can also all apply for additional supports through OCIF's top-up component.

Today, our government is pleased to announce the approval of 55 OCIF projects worth \$60 million, bringing the number of top-up projects funded by our government to 200 since 2015.

After listening closely to stakeholders like AMO, we are also tripling the size of the program from \$100 million to \$300 million.

OCIF supports smaller municipalities in a bigger way and makes a real difference for their residents.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. Supplementary?

Mr. Arthur Potts: My thanks to the minister for the great work he is doing building Ontario up, because addressing this infrastructure deficit is a major priority of our Premier and this side of the House.

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I know that the \$60 million will go a long way to addressing municipal infrastructure needs. I also know that the changes to the structure of OCIF will maintain the program's role as a major support for Ontario's small communities. Our infrastructure investments are being made on a truly province-wide scale, with every riding benefiting from the \$160 billion this government is investing over 12 years.

While we invest in our communities, the opposition seems focused on taking down the largest infrastructure investment in Ontario. We fear, and the people of Ontario fear, that they will cancel the OCIF program should either party opposite form the next government. Speaker, through you to the minister: Would you please outline exactly what the infrastructure programs mean for Ontario's residents?

Hon. Bob Chiarelli: The difference between our government and the parties opposite is that we have a plan and they don't. Our plan is making a positive difference for their constituents.

The leader of the third party should know that Hamilton is eligible to receive nearly \$33 million in clean water and waste water funding, to say nothing of the \$1 billion we have committed to their LRT.

The Leader of the Opposition should know that in his riding of Simcoe North, communities will benefit from \$8 million in OCIF and clean water funding, to say nothing of the \$474 million we invested in a mental health centre in his riding.

Communities in NDP-held Timmins—James Bay will benefit from \$5 million in combined OCIF and clean water funding.

Communities in PC-held Simcoe-Grey will benefit from over \$12 million.

Our government is working extremely hard to support all of our residents in every part of this province.

OPIOID ABUSE

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: My question is to the Minister of Health. I've written and spoken to the minister many times regarding the opioid crisis in Ottawa, a crisis which has caused almost as many overdoses in the first three months of 2017 as we saw in all of 2016.

I'm in daily contact with the parents and youth who are struggling with this addiction. These parents have taken matters into their own hands, organizing support groups, holding information sessions and raising funds for a youth centre because they feel that their government isn't listening to them.

I've received correspondence from the minister on the high-level things that the minister says they want to commit to, but the opioid strategy is either not working fast enough or it's not working at all. Will the minister visit Ottawa during the constituency break next week to meet with these families and myself to see their struggle and to commit to the action that they need?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: I first want to express my sympathy and compassion for the families the member opposite is referring to: the families in Kanata and the Ottawa area who have experienced such tragedies. Particularly, I think of the 14-year-old whose life was tragically lost because of an opioid overdose.

That's why we are taking the measures that we are, in an extremely comprehensive way, from ensuring appropriate prescribing of opioids to providing the appropriate treatment and life-saving medications like Naloxone, to ensuring that individuals, including youth, have access to the supports that they need. We announced, just a couple of months ago, \$140 million of new investments, including in cognitive behavioural therapy, that will reach individuals who are at risk and can support them in such situations.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I again extend my invitation to the Minister of Health to join us in Ottawa next week. I know he says that there's a lot of money out there, but there are still many people who are left behind and falling through the cracks. Here's an email I received from one parent dealing with this crisis first-hand:

"Unfortunately this has been a terrible week. In and out of hospital. He was staying downtown in a drug house. We found him Thursday. He was a mess. Totally out of it. Marks all over his face, his mouth. Feet so swollen from either his heart condition, or from injecting between his toes. We called police. They took him to ER and they released him six hours later!"

This mother was devastated. She finishes with this, and I want to leave this with you, Minister: "The system isn't doing anything about this because they are following the natural elimination of waste. Why spend money

on addiction? Most people will relapse over and over again. Why spend" \$5,000 "a week in hospital?"

Can the minister answer this mother, whose son is falling through the cracks and whose government is failing her?

Hon. Eric Hoskins: Mr. Speaker, we are taking action, including directly in Ottawa. The Premier and myself have committed to a meeting with municipal leaders, specifically on the opioid situation.

This year alone, we've invested—and I know the member opposite is well familiar with this treatment centre—\$1.5 million to the Dave Smith Youth Treatment Centre in Ottawa to support the construction of a new 30-bed youth residential treatment facility, helping more young Ontarians, including and especially young Ontarians and youth in the Ottawa region, and providing support to their families and helping them to overcome substance abuse and related issues.

This new centre is not a panacea, but it is part of a comprehensive approach where we have to touch this tragedy at every possible location that we can, geographically and whether it is with regard to avoiding individuals from becoming addicts in the first place or providing the necessary supports to leave that addiction, Mr. Speaker—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you. New question.

LABOUR DISPUTE

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: My question is to the Acting Premier. It has now been over a month since workers at the Canadian Hearing Society were forced off the job after working without a contract for four years. This means people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing don't have access to the 227 interpreters, speech-language pathologists, counsellors, literacy instructors and audiologists they depend on to thrive.

Speaker, no member of the deaf or hard-of-hearing community should be forced to go without service, period. Will the Acting Premier stand up for all clients of the Canadian Hearing Society, insist that no scab workers are used during the labour disruption, and ensure all parties return to the bargaining table immediately?

Hon. Charles Sousa: Minister of Community and Social Services.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the question. As the member knows, contract negotiations are a matter between the agency, as the employer, and the union. I'm sure the Minister of Labour will want to follow up in the supplementary. We certainly encourage the union and the agency to continue contract negotiations. We certainly hope that the matter will be resolved as quickly as possible, because, of course, the Canadian Hearing Society does—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Please. Carry on.

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Certainly, the agency does provide very valuable services to the deaf and hard-of-hear-

ing community. My ministry has been advised that there is a contingency plan in place so that there is continuity of services to these individuals served by this agency, and that is my ministry's primary concern.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: What the minister should know is that the government plays a large role in ensuring that no scab workers are used during a labour disruption. Since you fund the CHS, you have the ability to force the employer back to the table to actually bargain for a fair contract.

Again to the Acting Premier: Late last month, Mount Sinai permanently shut the doors to their audiology clinic. For people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, the scarcity of services in the Toronto area has just increased exponentially.

But it's not just Toronto. Workers at the Canadian Hearing Society are on strike in Windsor, Ottawa, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and throughout the province. Many of these workers are deaf or hard-of-hearing themselves.

I ask again, will the Acting Premier acknowledge the importance of these services to a vulnerable community, insist no scab workers are used during this labour disruption—that includes management and their families—and ensure the employer returns to the bargaining table to negotiate a fair deal immediately?

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Be seated, please. Thank you.

Minister?

Hon. Helena Jaczek: Minister of Labour.

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you for the supplementary, Speaker. During labour disputes, which nobody likes to see—

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Collective bargaining is tough. It's tough by its nature. Nobody likes to see disputes drag on for too long. It's a shared responsibility to get people back to the table.

The province of Ontario has some of the best mediators in this country. You see the track record they have: In over 98% of collective bargaining, an agreement is reached without a strike or a lockout in the province of Ontario. So we're involved with this. We want to see an end to it. But we'll take no lessons from the NDP. Last year: 18 work stoppages. When the NDP were in power, 139. That record speaks for itself.

1130

OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: My question is to the Minister of Labour. Over the past few weeks, I have seen some local coverage about the Minister of Labour's surprise visit to Peterborough. The minister was there to visit an information clinic for workers who previously worked at GE. My friend the member from Peterborough, Jeff Leal, also stopped in to meet the workers.

The media coverage and what I have heard from constituents in my riding of Northumberland–Quinte West have been extremely positive.

These workers and their families felt as though people were there to listen to them and to help them work through some of the troubles they have encountered as a result of their worker compensation claims.

Speaker, to the minister: Could you please explain more about the purpose of the information clinic and the next steps in dealing with these important constituents?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you to the member from Northumberland–Quinte West for his question and the involvement he has had in this issue to date.

It was a pleasure to work with the MPP for Peterborough, my seatmate, the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs—the support that he brought to this was just incredible—and the great volunteers, Speaker. There was Heather Brooks-Hill, Marion Burton and Kathy Dracup-Harris—ordinary people who stepped to the fore of this.

As a result of them stepping to the fore, at the end of March my ministry organized a three-day information clinic. All the parties came forward that are involved in this very complex case, and we started an information clinic. The Office of the Worker Adviser, the WSIB and OHOW were there. Over these three days, these organizations were able to sit down face to face with workers in Peterborough and were able to help them through.

I'm proud of the work that has been done, Speaker. There's more to come.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary.

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: Thank you to the minister. I agree with him that this information clinic was an important first step. It was an opportunity to bring guidance on a complicated issue to the community, all in one place. I will certainly be following the issue as it moves forward.

I know the Minister of Labour is working hard to transform workplace health and safety in the province. Keeping people safe at work begins with creating a culture in Ontario where health and safety at work is paramount.

Speaker, through you to the minister, what else is our government doing to ensure that we are working to prevent occupational disease in the province?

Hon. Kevin Daniel Flynn: Thank you again to the member from Northumberland–Quinte West for that question.

It's critical to my ministry that all occupational diseases are treated with the same seriousness that we bring to physical injuries, which we've done so well on. The ministry has developed a proactive strategy for detection and prevention. It includes regulation, it includes enforcement, and it includes research, education and awareness.

The cornerstone of this, though, is going to be a dedicated occupational disease response team that is being put in place this very year. This new unit is going to examine and respond to all aspects of occupational disease exposure, and that goes from the initial report to enforcement to helping the workers themselves.

Speaker, everybody in the province of Ontario who goes to work each day deserves to work in an environ-

ment that's safe, free from harm, and to return home at the end of each day.

I'm committed to ensuring that Ontario remains one of the safest places you can work on the entire planet.

ENERGY POLICIES

Mr. Jim McDonell: To the Minister of Energy: When Ontarians were facing disconnections in the middle of winter, the Premier said to this House that Hydro One was already complying with a no-disconnection policy. So it's obvious that, once again, this government does not know what's going on at Hydro.

Steve and George, in my riding, were disconnected on February 20 and 21 and had to deal with flooded basements and buying generators to avoid frozen pipes, as Hydro One had silently disconnected their service. Both had no arrears.

The Minister of Energy says, "That's the one thing they have been doing, Mr. Speaker: enhancing their customer service."

Speaker, is this government made of hydro salespeople, or are they actually made of ministers who will provide proper oversight?

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: I know that lately, the opposition have been bringing stories to this House about individual customers. What's frustrating is that often the member hasn't contacted me directly about this issue, or apparently hasn't even contacted the local utility to try and resolve the issue before bringing it up here in question period.

Last week, for example, a member opposite raised the story of someone who received a false electricity bill after their house was tragically lost in a fire. If the member had talked to me or Hydro One, we could have gotten the issue resolved right away. When they learned of the mistake, Hydro One immediately reversed the charges and has promised the customer four months of free credits.

But, apparently, helping this customer wasn't really the priority of that party. I get it, Mr. Speaker. If you don't have a real plan on electricity, it makes sense to try and focus on the problems—

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Thank you.

Interjections.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Supplementary?

Mr. Jim McDonell: Back to the minister: Minister, we have resolved the problems, but they shouldn't have happened in the first place.

The government promises modest compensation at Hydro One, and we see outrageous salaries. The government promises no disconnections, yet Hydro One disconnects anyway. Every time a story of incompetence and outrageous customer service at Hydro One comes to the House, all the government can say is, "We'll look into it," or that "We're becoming customer-focused," or "Hydro One is becoming a better company."

How long will it take for this government to realize it's a pattern and it needs to be broken? As the majority shareholder of Hydro One, it is the minister's duty and

obligation to act in the public interest and fix these problems. When will the government—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Minister of Children and Youth Services.

Mr. Jim McDonell: —find some decency and take some long-needed leadership on executive pay, transparency and customer service, while they are still the majority shareholder?

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: I'm always happy to rise and talk about the great work that this side of the House has done on the electricity file. For decades, Mr. Speaker—

Interjections.

Mr. John Yakabuski: That should take about eleven seconds.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Renfrew, second time. It's never too late to get warned or named.

Finish, please.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: It's interesting that—

Interjection.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): The member from Thornhill: I didn't even get to sit down.

Let's try this again.

Hon. Glenn Thibeault: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're happy to actually provide solutions for the people of Ontario. That's what we do, and we act on that.

On that side of the House, they have no plan, they have no idea what to do, and that's why they come to us to actually get things done. That's what we've done with the fair hydro plan, that's what we've done on these issues, and we'll continue to do that as we build this province up.

VISITORS

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): We have with us in the Speaker's gallery a delegation from the National Council of Austria; they are led by Karlheinz Kopf, Second President of the National Council. Welcome. That would be the Deputy Speaker, for those who don't know the translation.

DEFERRED VOTES

PUTTING CONSUMERS FIRST ACT (CONSUMER PROTECTION STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT), 2017

LOI DE 2017 DONNANT LA PRIORITÉ AUX CONSOMMATEURS (MODIFIANT DES LOIS EN CE QUI CONCERNE LA PROTECTION DU CONSOMMATEUR)

Deferred vote on the motion for third reading of the following bill:

Bill 59, An Act to enact a new Act with respect to home inspections and to amend various Acts with respect to financial services and consumer protection / Projet de loi 59, Loi édictant une nouvelle loi concernant les

inspections immobilières et modifiant diverses lois concernant les services financiers et la protection du consommateur.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Call in the members. This will be a five-minute bell.

The division bells rang from 1139 to 1144.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): On April 4, 2017, Madame Lalonde moved third reading of Bill 59, An Act to enact a new Act with respect to home inspections and to amend various Acts with respect to financial services and consumer protection.

All those in favour, please rise one at a time and be recognized by the Clerk.

Ayes

Albanese, Laura
Anderson, Granville
Armstrong, Teresa J.
Arnett, Ted
Bailey, Robert
Baker, Yvan
Ballard, Chris
Barrett, Toby
Bisson, Gilles
Bradley, James J.
Chan, Michael
Chiarelli, Bob
Cho, Raymond Sung Joon
Clark, Steve
Coe, Lorne
Colle, Mike
Coteau, Michael
Crack, Grant
Damerla, Dipika
Del Duca, Steven
Delaney, Bob
Dhillon, Vic
Dickson, Joe
DiNovo, Cheri
Dong, Han
Duguid, Brad
Fedeli, Victor
Fife, Catherine
Flynn, Kevin Daniel

Forster, Cindy
French, Jennifer K.
Gates, Wayne
Gélinas, France
Gretzky, Lisa
Hardeman, Ernie
Hatfield, Percy
Hillier, Randy
Hoggarth, Ann
Hoskins, Eric
Hunter, Mitzie
Jaczek, Helena
Jones, Sylvia
Kiwala, Sophie
Lalonde, Marie-France
MacCharles, Tracy
MacLeod, Lisa
Malhi, Harinder
Mangat, Amrit
Martins, Cristina
Martow, Gila
Mauro, Bill
McDonell, Jim
McGarry, Kathryn
McMahon, Eleanor
McMeekin, Ted
McNaughton, Monte
Miller, Norm
Miller, Paul

Moridi, Reza
Munro, Julia
Murray, Glen R.
Naidoo-Harris, Indira
Naqvi, Yasir
Nicholls, Rick
Oosterhoff, Sam
Pettapiece, Randy
Potts, Arthur
Qaadri, Shafiq
Rinaldi, Lou
Sandals, Liz
Scott, Laurie
Singh, Jagmeet
Smith, Todd
Sousa, Charles
Tabuns, Peter
Takhar, Harinder S.
Taylor, Monique
Thibeault, Glenn
Thompson, Lisa M.
Vanhoef, John
Vernile, Daine
Wilson, Jim
Wong, Soo
Yakabuski, John
Yurek, Jeff
Zimmer, David

diversity of our landscapes, our wilderness and our wildlife.

I want to mark this year's National Wildlife Week by celebrating an organization which is promoting both awareness and conservation of our wildlife. The Salthaven Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Centre is a grassroots, non-profit organization that started out in 2004 near Mount Brydges, in my riding of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. Since then, they have cared for more than a thousand injured and orphaned animals and birds each year, enabling them to regain their freedom and return to their natural habitat. Founder Brian Salt and his dedicated team of volunteers have treated everything from an injured great horned owl to an orphaned mallard duck to a poisoned red fox.

Through their community outreach programs, Salthaven educates and inspires diverse audiences, introducing people, especially young people, to their local wildlife and helping them to better understand the role we each have to play in the health of our ecosystems.

I want to thank Salthaven and their volunteers and supporters for the tremendous impact they have locally and for helping to preserve Ontario's proud natural heritage.

During National Wildlife Week, I would encourage everyone to seek opportunities to learn about local wildlife and perhaps to rediscover an appreciation for nature and the outdoors.

POLISH COMMUNITY

Mrs. Lisa Gretzky: Last week, I had the pleasure of attending the opening of a new exhibit dedicated to showcasing the contributions of the Polish people to Canada. Just in time for Canada's 150th anniversary, the University of Windsor's Leddy Library and the Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor have teamed up to showcase the Polish-Canadian Commemorative Exhibition: A Canada 150 Tribute and Celebration.

Speaker, despite having Polish roots myself through my husband's family, while visiting the exhibit there was still much I learned about the extent of the contributions by Polish people. Did you know that my community of Windsor had a recruitment centre for Polish people during World War II, or that one of the first members of Canadian Parliament was of Polish descent—Alexandre-Édouard Kierzkowski? Some members may remember the exhibit dedicated to Mr. Kierzkowski that was on display at Queen's Park last year.

The Polish-Canadian Commemorative Exhibition features eight displays presented in three categories, including the contribution of Poles to Canada, why Poles are grateful to Canada, and the contribution of Poles to the world.

I would like to thank the Polish-Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor and, in particular, its president, Jerry Barycki, along with the University of Windsor, for making this possible.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

WILDLIFE PROTECTION

Mr. Monte McNaughton: This year, we are celebrating Canada's 150th year as a nation. It is a history that has been shaped and coloured by the richness and

If you didn't have a chance to visit the official opening of the exhibit, Speaker, you're in luck. The exhibit will remain on display this week, and I would invite all members of this assembly to come to Windsor and learn more about the contributions of Polish people to Canada.

AGNES MACPHAIL

Mr. Arthur Potts: Every day as I climb the centre staircase to come into this legislative chamber, I give a nod to the carving of Agnes Macphail's head in the lobby.

You may have seen over the weekend, Speaker, that the Bank of Canada has unveiled a new \$10 commemorative banknote for the Canada 150 celebrations. The front of the bill features portraits of Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald; fellow Father of Confederation Sir George-Étienne Cartier; James Gladstone, Canada's first indigenous senator; and Canada's first female member of Parliament, Agnes Macphail.

Macphail was the only woman in Canada to be elected to the House of Commons in 1921, the first year in which women got the vote. She was once described as "the most important woman in public life that Canada has produced in the 20th century."

In 1943, Macphail returned to politics, winning the provincial riding of York East in Toronto, an area that encompasses my own riding of Beaches-East York. With Rae Luckock, she was one of the first women to become a member of the Ontario Legislature.

Every year since 1993, there has been an awards ceremony held in honour of Ms. Macphail. The Agnes Macphail Award recognizes an East York resident who has made outstanding contributions as a volunteer by "thinking globally and acting locally," an expression that she coined. This year's winner was Patrick Rocca.

I want to say congratulations to the wonderful group of people who lobbied hard to see her face honoured on the \$10 banknote, with a special thank you to Lorna Krawchuk for all the time she put in to make sure the Agnes Macphail Award is held every year.

PROPERTY RIGHTS

Mr. Randy Hillier: Last week, I tabled a property rights motion in the House which would add two sections to section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It reads as follows:

"(1) The following section is inserted after section 7:

"7.1(1) In Ontario, everyone has the right not to be deprived, by any act of the Legislative Assembly or by any action taken under authority of an act of the Legislative Assembly, of the title, use, or enjoyment of real property or of any right attached to real property, or of any improvement made to or upon real property, unless made whole by means of full, just and timely financial compensation, and that this section refers to any act of the Legislative Assembly made before or after the coming into force of this section."

It also adds a second section:

"(2) This amendment may be cited as the Constitution Amendment, 2012 (No Expropriation in Ontario without Compensation), and reference to the Constitution Acts, 1867 to 1982, shall be deemed to include a reference to the Constitution Amendment, 2012 (No Expropriation in Ontario without Compensation)."

HIGHWAY SIGNS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I believe that the Minister of Transportation's provincial highway signs policy discriminates against small northern communities like Alban, in my riding of Nickel Belt. Before the four-laning of Highway 69—we're very thankful for it—drivers would see the directional sign that said that Alban was only three kilometres off the highway. They would come into town, grab a bite to eat, do some grocery shopping, and even spend the night at one of the beautiful lodges, like Presqu'ile Cottages or the Beausejour Inn.

Now, with the four-laning of Highway 69, the new directional sign off the highway does not list Alban. It lists Noelville, which is 30 kilometres away, and Sturgeon Falls, which is even further. To motorists, it looks like you have to drive at least 30 kilometres before you can buy food or gas. That's not the case.

RDH Mining, which is an international mining equipment manufacturer, wrote me to say, "It was hard enough to get customers to find our location as it was. Now, with this omission from the new sign to our community, it will be an even greater challenge."

Right now, many businesses, from mining to forestry to restaurants, grocery stores and lodging, are all losing business in Alban because of the made-in-Toronto sign policy that makes no sense.

This needs to change, Speaker. The people of Alban, the businesses of Alban and the motorists travelling Highway 69 trying to find Alban deserve a proper directional sign on Highway 69 directing them to this community. It is that simple.

JOHN POLANYI COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

Mr. Mike Colle: I want to talk about a remarkable school in my riding. It's John Polanyi Collegiate Institute, which is at Lawrence and Allen Road. This is a school that was previously known as Bathurst Heights. It was closed during the Mike Harris days but reopened under the name of the John Polanyi Collegiate Institute, named after the Nobel Prize-winning physicist John Polanyi of U of T.

It is now up to 1,000 students. It's a thriving school, with all kinds of incredible, unique programs. It has an outstanding principal who has won Canada's outstanding principal award: Aiman Flahat. He has brought in a partnership with the Rotman School of Management so that grades 11 and 12 students have the opportunity to take business leadership, which teaches them integrated thinking.

It offers the Toronto school board's only science, math and robotics program. The school is a hub of activity, and recently hosted the grades 7 and 8 girls' STEM conference.

It is a school that is very active not only in academics but very good in sports. It has one of the best basketball programs in the city of Toronto, and is very good in archery and in other track and field sports.

Anyway, this is part of the revitalization of Lawrence Heights. This school is a real gem. Young students come from all over central Toronto to go to John Polanyi.

Congratulations to the teachers, students and their families at John Polanyi Collegiate.

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ATWOOD LIONS CLUB

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Earlier this month, the Atwood Lions Club celebrated a milestone: their 60th anniversary. I was fortunate enough to join their celebration on April 1. Also in attendance was the club's charter president from 1957, Derek Nind.

The Atwood Lions Club is part of Lions Clubs International, a global service organization with over 1.4 million members. Its founder, Melvin Jones, had a vision of giving back to his community and beyond. Indeed, Melvin Jones's personal motto was, "You can't get very far until you start doing for somebody else." By extension, the Lions' motto is, "We serve." Across the globe, Lions clubs are making a huge difference in areas like care for children dealing with blindness; diabetes prevention and treatment; and a partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

Locally, the Atwood Lions Club has been a fixture in serving their community. They run a wonderful skating rink that kids and families get to enjoy every year. Every July, they also hold a hugely popular parade, barbecue and family fun fair, along with their famous elimination draw.

Here's the point: Atwood Lions Club, like so many Lions and other service clubs across Ontario, strengthens our community. As a long-time Lion, I can tell you firsthand that Lions are making a difference.

I invite everyone to join me in congratulating the Atwood Lions Club on its 60th anniversary and wishing them many more years of success in the future. Roar, Lions.

BATTLE OF VIMY RIDGE

Mr. John Fraser: I had the privilege on Sunday morning of attending the Vimy memorial at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier with my colleague from Ottawa Centre, the Attorney General. It was a very moving ceremony. We had Silver Cross moms there. We had the Ottawa Choral Society, and violinists playing a lament.

When we speak about the Battle of Vimy Ridge, we often talk about the birth of a nation and how we became co-signatories to the Versailles treaty. But what it really is all about is sacrifice. That's the memory that we honour. There have been many battles fought since then.

In every family, somebody has, somewhere along the line, made that kind of sacrifice. As we go forward and we get to the 101st anniversary and remember all those who served us, we must remember that sacrifice, because that's how we have what we have now.

At the end of the ceremony, there was a beautiful moment when they released some doves, and as the doves circled the cenotaph, somehow a flock of Canada geese came by at exactly the same time. It was really quite incredible for all of those people who were there, and truly a surprise, but a wonderful part of that celebration.

HMCS YORK

Mr. Toby Barrett: I congratulate Commander Rob Johnston and the officers and sailors of Her Majesty's Canadian Ship York, who recently conducted a domestic maritime exercise in Toronto harbour. HMCS York is the largest naval reserve division in the country, based here in Toronto. The training day involved search and rescue on the water, diving and treatment of casualties. The exercise involved eight boats and over 150 personnel and observers from the Royal Canadian Navy—HMCS York and HMCS Star—25 field ambulance, Toronto's Office of Emergency Management, the Toronto police marine unit, Coast Guard Auxiliary, St. John Ambulance, Commissionaires Great Lakes, PortsToronto and Billy Bishop airport.

This type of training helps prepare our men and women in uniform in case they are called upon to act in support of our municipal and provincial agencies.

Special thanks to the organizers from HMCS York's operations department, including Petty Officer Mlynarczyk, Petty Officer Sakki, Master Seaman Walia, Acting Sub-Lieutenant Habayeb—and this information, supplied to me by Lieutenant Paul Hong.

To all involved, Bravo Zulu.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): I thank all members for their statements.

PETITIONS

PALLIATIVE CARE

Mr. Toby Barrett: Speaker, this is a petition, and I realize the title is directed to the House of Commons in Parliament assembled.

"Whereas hospice palliative care is an approach that improves the quality of life of patients and their families facing problems associated with life-threatening illness through the prevention and relief of suffering by means of early identification, assessment and treatment of pain and other problems: physical, psycho-social and spiritual; and

"Whereas hospice palliative care provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms, affirms life, regards dying as a normal process and intends neither to hasten nor postpone death; and

“Whereas hospice palliative care is not specifically mentioned in the Canada Health Act; and

“Whereas hospice palliative care is not accessible and available to all Canadians;

“We, the undersigned residents of Canada, request the House of Commons in Parliament Assembled to specifically identify hospice palliative care as a defined medical service covered under the Canada Health Act so that provincial and territorial governments will be entitled to funds under the Canada Health Transfer system to be used to provide accessible and available hospice palliative care for all residents of Canada in their respective provinces and territories.”

As I indicated at the commencement, this is directed to the House of Commons.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Before I move to the next petition, I’m going to dovetail into that particular piece of information—not picking on the member, but reminding everybody that your petitions should be stamped first before you read them. Quite frankly, we’re not sure of all the language, and in this case it would not be appropriate to this particular House for that petition. I’m going to let it pass if the table decides to stamp it, but I’m reminding all members, and spread that amongst your colleagues: to the table first for a stamp for an official approval of the petition. Thank you.

PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

M^{me} France Gélinas: I have this petition that has been approved by the table, and I wanted to thank Arthur Schmith from Lively, in my riding, for sending it. It goes as follows:

“Privatizing Hydro One: Another Wrong Choice.

“Whereas once you privatize Hydro One, there’s no return; and

“Whereas we’ll lose billions in reliable annual revenues for schools and hospitals; and

“Whereas we’ll lose our biggest economic asset and control over our energy future; and

“Whereas we’ll pay higher and higher hydro bills just like what’s happened elsewhere”;

They petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“To stop the sale of Hydro One and make sure Ontario families benefit from owning Hydro One now and for generations to come.”

I support this petition, and will affix my name to it and ask Nicholas to bring it to the Clerk.

NANJING MASSACRE

Ms. Soo Wong: I’m very pleased to table another 5,000 signatures in support of my bill today.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the events in Asian countries during World War II are not well-known;

“Whereas Ontarians have not had an opportunity for a thorough discussion and examination of the World War II atrocities in Asia;...

“Whereas Ontario is recognized as an inclusive society;

“Whereas Ontario is the home to one of the largest Asian populations in Canada, with over 2.6 million in 2011;

“Whereas some Ontarians have direct relationships with victims and survivors of the Nanjing Massacre, whose stories are untold;

“Whereas the Nanjing Massacre was an atrocity with over 200,000 Chinese civilians and soldiers alike were indiscriminately killed, and tens of thousands of women were sexually assaulted, in the Japanese capture of the city;

“Whereas December 13, 2017, marks the 80th anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre;...

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“That the Legislature pass the Nanjing Massacre Commemorative Day Act, 2016 by December 8, 2017, to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the Nanjing Massacre, which will enable Ontarians, especially those with Asian heritage, to plan commemorative activities to honour the victims and families affected by the Nanjing Massacre.”

I support the petition and give my petition to Franny.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Ms. Laurie Scott: Freshly stamped by the Clerk’s office: “Stop the Move of the Provincial Offences Court from Minden to Lindsay.

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas the Ministry of the Attorney General has announced it is closing the provincial offences court in the town of Minden; and

“Whereas closing the court in Minden would render justice inaccessible for many residents in the county who do not have reliable access to transportation to travel to Lindsay; and

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“Whereas the government did not consult with the county of Haliburton to support this decision; and

“Whereas the Ontario Provincial Police will incur overtime and travelling costs which will result in higher taxes passed directly onto our taxpayers; and

“Whereas the courts have a positive effect on the economy of the county of Haliburton and closing the courthouse will divert money out of town;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows: that the Minister of the Attorney General immediately reverse the decision to move the Minden provincial offences court to Lindsay from the period of July 1, 2017, to July 1, 2018, and ensure that residents in the county of Haliburton have access to justice in their own community.”

It’s signed by the reeve and council in Minden Hills.

GRANDVIEW CHILDREN’S CENTRE

Ms. Jennifer K. French: I have a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

"Whereas Grandview Children's Centre is Durham region's only outpatient rehabilitation facility for children and youth with special needs; and

"Whereas Grandview Children's Centre's main facility was originally constructed in 1983 to serve 400 children and now has a demand of over 8,000 children annually; and ...

"Whereas it is crucial for Grandview Children's Centre to complete a major development project to construct a new facility in order to meet the existing as well as future needs of Durham region's children, youth and families; and ...

"Whereas since 2009 the need for services has continued to increase, with over 2,753 children, youth and families currently on the wait-list for services;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"That the province of Ontario prioritizes, commits to and approves Grandview Children's Centre's capital development plan so that the chronic shortage of facilities in Durham can be alleviated."

I wholeheartedly support this petition. I'll sign my name and send it with page Kishan.

DENTAL CARE

Mr. Lou Rinaldi: I have a petition that reads as such:

"Whereas lack of access to dental care affects overall health and well-being, and poor oral health is linked to diabetes, cardiovascular, respiratory disease, and Alzheimer's disease; and

"Whereas it is estimated that two to three million people in Ontario have not seen a dentist in the past 10 years, "mainly due to the cost of private dental services; and

"Whereas approximately every nine minutes a person in Ontario arrives at a hospital emergency room with a dental problem but can only get painkillers and antibiotics, and this costs the health care system at least \$31 million annually with no treatment of the problem;

"Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario to invest in public oral health programs for low-income adults and seniors...."

I agree. I will sign this petition and send it to the desk with Laura.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Norm Miller: I have a petition with regard to electricity prices. It reads:

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas electricity rates have risen by more than 300% since the current government took office; and

"Whereas over half of Ontarians' power bills are regulatory and delivery charges and the global adjustment; and

"Whereas the global adjustment is a tangible measure of how much Ontario must overpay for unneeded wind

and solar power, and the cost of offloading excess power to our neighbours at a loss; and

"Whereas the market rate for electricity, according to IESO data, has been less than three cents per kilowatt hour to date in 2016, yet the government's lack of responsible science-based planning has not allowed these reductions to be passed on to Ontarians, resulting in electrical bills several times more than that amount; and

"Whereas the implementation of cap-and-trade will drive the cost of electricity even higher and deny Ontarians the option to choose affordable natural gas heating; and

"Whereas more and more Ontarians are being forced to cut down on essential expenses such as food and medicines in order to pay their increasingly unaffordable electricity bills; and

"Whereas the ill-conceived energy policies of this government that ignored the advice of independent experts and government agencies, such as the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) and the independent electrical system operator (IESO), and are not based on science have resulted in Ontarians' electricity costs rising, despite lower natural gas costs and increased energy conservation in the province;

"We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

"To take immediate steps to reduce the total cost of electricity paid for by Ontarians, including costs associated with power consumed, the global adjustment, delivery charges, administrative charges, tax and any other charges added to Ontarians' energy bills."

Mr. Speaker, I've signed this, and I'll give it to Nicholas.

EATING DISORDERS

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: This is a petition for action on eating disorders: I'm reading this on behalf of Shelly Payne from London, Ontario.

"To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

"Whereas at any given time there are an estimated one million people suffering from eating disorders in Canada;

"Whereas the mental health system in Ontario is fragmented and is failing to provide the necessary supports to those suffering;

"Whereas eating disorders have the highest mortality rates of any mental illness;

"Whereas three out of four youth suffering from mental illness in Ontario do not receive treatment;

"Whereas the morbidity of eating disorders is extensive and the life expectancy of individuals with anorexia nervosa is 20 to 25 years less than would normally be expected;

"Whereas Ontario's Auditor General reported that the Ontario government spent \$10 million sending 127 youth to the United States for services not offered in Ontario;

"Whereas that \$10 million could have helped more than 500 people suffering from eating disorders here in Ontario;

“Therefore we, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Immediately pass Bill 78, Eating Disorders Awareness Week Act, 2016;

“To create a provincial strategy to deal with the devastating effects of eating disorders as a frequently misunderstood mental illness;

“To invest the \$10 million used to send people to other countries for services into Ontario so that all Ontarians suffering from eating disorders are able to access the mental health services and supports they need when they need them.”

I sign this petition and give it to page Charlotte to deliver to the table.

HYDRO RATES

Ms. Daiene Vernile: This petition is entitled “Support the Ontario Fair Hydro Plan.”

“To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas electricity prices have increased and in too many cases become unaffordable for Ontarians;

“Whereas Ontario is a prosperous province and people should never have to choose between hydro and other daily necessities;

“Whereas people want to know that hydro rate relief is on the way; that relief will go to everyone; and that relief will be lasting because it is built on significant change;

“Whereas the Ontario fair hydro plan would reduce hydro bills for residential consumers, small businesses and farms by an average of 25% as part of a significant system restructuring, with increases held to the rate of inflation for the next four years;

“Whereas the Ontario fair hydro plan would provide people with low incomes and those living in rural communities with even greater reductions to their electricity bills;

“We, the undersigned, petition the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as follows:

“Support the Ontario fair hydro plan and provide relief for Ontario electricity consumers as quickly as possible;

“Continue working to ensure clean, reliable and affordable electricity is available for all Ontarians.”

I agree with this, and will put my initials to it and give the petition to page Aidan.

HYDRO RATES

Mr. Jack MacLaren: “To the Legislative Assembly of Ontario:

“Whereas Ontario hydro bills have long caused confusion for Ontarians;

“Whereas Ontario hydro bills bundle several costs under often-misleading headings;

“Whereas the Ontario government has committed to operating in a transparent manner;

“Whereas quasi-governmental entities like Hydro One and other electricity providers in the province have also committed to operating in an open and transparent manner;

“Whereas the cost of hydro in the province of Ontario is the highest in the developed world;

“We, the undersigned, call on the Ontario government to revise electricity billing so that each consumer bill provides an exact and accurate breakdown of all costs being charged to the consumer.”

I agree with this petition. I affix my signature to it and give it to page Taylor.

SOINS DE LONGUE DURÉE

M^{me} France Gélinas: J’aimerais remercier M^{me} Marie-Anne Vaillancourt pour avoir signé la pétition.

« Le traitement équitable des personnes âgées ...

« Attendu que les personnes âgées frêles qui ont besoin de soins de longue durée dans des foyers du Réseau local d’intégration des services de santé du Nord-Est (RLISS du Nord-Est) ont été contraintes de quitter l’hôpital pour attendre le placement ou de rester et de payer des frais hospitaliers d’environ 1 000 \$ par jour; et

« Attendu que les personnes âgées frêles qui ont besoin de soins de longue durée à Sudbury et à Sault-Sainte-Marie ont été poussées à déménager dans des foyers qui ne sont pas de leur choix ou à des lits ‘provisoires’ dans des établissements qui ne respectent pas les normes prescrites par la loi ...

« Attendu que la pratique consistant à maintenir les patients dans des lits ‘provisoires’ est contraire à la politique du ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée (MSSLD) qui identifie les lits ‘provisoires’ comme destinés à assurer un écoulement continu afin que les lits provisoires soient constamment libérés... »

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Ils demandent à l’Assemblée législative de l’Ontario deux choses. Dans un premier temps :

« S’assurer que les fonctionnaires du système de santé utilisent des lits ‘provisoires’ comme étant ‘conformes’, conformément à l’équité et conformément à la politique » du ministère; et

« S’assurer que les patients ne subissent pas de pression sur les taux hospitaliers et réaliser les promesses faites à des centaines de résidents de maisons de soins infirmiers qui ont accepté de se déplacer temporairement avec la promesse qu’ils seraient remplacés aussitôt qu’un lit dans une maison de leur choix est devenu disponible. »

J’appuie cette pétition. Je vais y afficher mon nom, et je demande à Zara de l’amener à la table des greffiers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ANTI-RACISM ACT, 2017

LOI DE 2017 CONTRE LE RACISME

Resuming the debate adjourned on April 6, 2017, on the motion for second reading of the following bill:

Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures / Projet de loi 114, Loi prévoyant des mesures contre le racisme.

The Speaker (Hon. Dave Levac): Further debate?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's my pleasure again to rise to speak to Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures.

Before I begin my remarks on behalf of the Progressive Conservative caucus and my leader, Patrick Brown, if I may, I assure the members of the Coptic community here in Ontario that our hearts are with them at this time, and so are our thoughts. In particular, I would like to reach out to my own Coptic Christian community in Nepean, at St. Mary Coptic church, which is just around the corner from my home. Yesterday, as you're aware, there was a terrorist attack in Egypt that affected these Christians who were praying. It gives me great pain to know that those who go into a place of worship may never come out. You'll recall this happened in Quebec not too long ago. I just wanted to put that out on behalf of our caucus and, I'm sure, all members of this assembly.

It gives me great pleasure once again to speak on behalf of Patrick Brown and the Ontario PC caucus regarding anti-racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry and, of course, the systemic discrimination of Ontario's indigenous population. As I've stated many times in this assembly, hate is hate. All kinds of hate need to be condemned, whether it is vandalism, violence or even the subtle digs and/or strange looks those who are racialized experience.

I can tell you, I've seen at recent events that hate in all of its forms exists. We've seen it on university campuses. We saw it in swastikas that were spray-painted in Hamilton just weeks ago. We saw it in my own city of Ottawa when all forms of religions were vandalized at their places of worship. That type of fear that people would place on others who are just simply trying to go about their way of life is very troubling to me, Speaker, and I think that's why it's very important that we have conversations.

As you know, when we spoke to anti-Muslim bigotry in the Legislature just a few months ago, I talked about the fact that when it comes to race, religion, sexual orientation or creed, whenever we talk about hate because people are afraid, we have to take it right down. We have to talk about what we agree with each other on and what our similarities are, and we have to build from there.

I know in this Legislature today—we all go into our communities and we talk to people. We talk to people who are different from us. At the end of the day, we all realize that they are always struggling with something. We all do, whether that's paying your bills—your heat, your hydro; whether your child has mental illness or addiction issues; whether you have a frail parent who needs care at a long-term-care facility. If we can't have that conversation, recognizing that the person we're communicating with, the person we see who may be different from us, actually has the same struggles, then we're not doing it right. So I think it's important that we have this conversation in this assembly about making sure that we erase those systemic barriers for people who are just like

us but who may look different, may pray differently or may love differently than we do.

I know that many in this assembly will recognize that all members of this assembly have had a long record in defending human rights and standing up against racism, bigotry and hatred. I would like to point out that my Progressive Conservative caucus also has a strong and proud legacy when it comes to that. We in the Progressive Conservative caucus support measures that advance racial equality. As a Legislature, we have frequently condemned hate activity against Ontarians, sometimes generally, other times more specifically, through non-binding motions or through private members' legislation. Today, we have Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures, which talks about all races and all religions in the province of Ontario. The PC caucus has in fact been a leader in defending citizens who have been targeted from bigotry, harassment and hate. It is our duty as legislators to lead our communities through debates of humanity, inclusion and tolerance.

Speaker, just last month, on March 20, I held a day of humanity, inclusion and acceptance in my constituency, at the Ottawa Torah Centre. That synagogue is brand new, recently built, and has a wonderful rabbi named Rabbi Blum. He is a true community leader and a true Canadian. He espouses such a kind way of dealing with the community. I want to talk a little bit about it in the context of making sure that, as we grow—and I'll talk about statistics in a little bit, but as we grow in Ottawa as a city and in this province, as we welcome people from all around the world, it's important that we have that debate. I want to tell you a little bit about this day, Speaker. I know I spoke about it earlier on when I was able to have an opportunity on this bill, but it started in the morning, when Rabbi Blum and his dear friend Dr. Aisha Sherazi, who is a hijab-wearing woman, came in. They ran a workshop for all of us to get to know one another for what's inside us rather than what we appear to be. The workshop was quite fascinating. In fact, it was very popular, so much so that my local imam said to the rabbi—Imam Delic said to Rabbi Blum: "I need you to come to my mosque to put this on."

The day only got better from there. We heard from Ottawa immigration support. They came in and did a presentation. I'll use some of their statistics in a little bit. Then we had Imam Delic at the pulpit of the synagogue giving a talk about what it means to be a Canadian. After that, we had Brian Lee Crowley from the Macdonald-Laurier Institute come in and talk about what makes Canada great.

We actually forgot what other people looked like and how they prayed and started thinking about each other as Canadians. We became more patriotic about what a great nation we are. We had a wonderful elder, Annie from the Algonquins. She gave us a wonderful blessing. We got to talk to her, and it was incredible.

What really was incredible for me was the afternoon, when we met survivors of genocide, survivors who fled their country to come to Canada. We had a wonderful

little old lady. She is a Holocaust survivor, but she has been an advocate. She spoke to us about fleeing Germany—sorry; I believe she was Austrian. We had a Rwandan genocide survivor who told us that she was shot in the head and in the leg. Her parents were murdered. She had seven or eight brothers and sisters, all of whom died except for one baby girl. She had been sent to Canada, but she wanted desperately to go back to find her family. So she went back to Rwanda and built a park with some of the people who had also survived the genocide. She said that it was only then, after she found her one remaining sister and she had built this park with others, that she truly felt that she could come back to Canada and start her life over. I can tell you, Speaker, that that was one of the most impactful things.

We also had a man from the Yazidi genocide. As we're all aware, the Yazidis right now are suffering a terrible genocide in Syria, a world away. Sometimes we dim it on our television sets, but at the end of the day, we must never forget that these atrocities are happening. It is genocide. Then we had someone from the Armenian genocide. Rabbi Bulka, my dear friend, was the moderator of that.

By the end of that, we were spent, as you can imagine, from hearing from people who had suffered through atrocities. You may ask, "What does this have to do with here, in this Legislature? What does that have to do with this piece of legislation?" It has everything to do with this piece of legislation. It has everything to do with this debate that we are having on making sure that there is racial equality in this province. That is what's very important.

As I said at the beginning, it's our duty to lead our communities through debates of humanity, inclusion and acceptance. I can say that I was very pleased to support, on many occasions, members of my own caucus as they put forward legislation over the years to ensure that that happens.

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For example, my close friend and colleague MPP Gila Martow succeeded in the Legislature having rejected the BDS movement in an important gesture to Ottawa's vibrant Jewish community.

I'm very close with the Jewish community. Of any group in Ontario—and I will get to these statistics later—they are the most likely to experience hate. The Toronto police suggest, as well as Statistics Canada—the numbers do not lie—that our Jewish population in the province of Ontario experiences more hate and has recorded more hate than any other group in the province of Ontario.

Gila Martow's motion, which I was proud to speak to, was an important gesture to our Jewish community, to reject that BDS movement. It was anti-Semitism at the root of this movement, and for us to condemn it was the right thing. As a Legislature, we did the right thing, the moral thing.

I always tell this story. For anybody who has ever travelled to Israel—I have, and it was one of the most amazing experiences of my life, spiritually, and obvious-

ly to learn about world affairs. There was fighting in Syria at that time, in 2014, and some of the shelling, actually, across the border into Israel. When we were at the Golan Heights, we did see that activity. I heard the guns all night, and I woke up to the little birds.

But that's not what I want to talk to you about; it's about Yad Vashem. If you ever have the opportunity to go to Israel, go to Yad Vashem. It's the international Holocaust memorial. One thing that stuck with me when I walked through there—talk about emotionally draining. When you get toward the end, there is a glass floor, and when you look down, there are these little black slippers, like ballet slippers. There are thousands of them under this floor. You realize at that moment—you don't need a tour guide to tell you—when you are walking on that glass floor, that the shoes that are under there are from people who perished in the Holocaust. You don't quite ever get over a visit to Yad Vashem. I think it's important to do that.

That motion that was brought forward by my colleague Gila Martow was so important. It spoke to the world atrocities that have been experienced, but it also spoke to the reality of anti-Semitism in the province of Ontario and how we must move beyond that.

My colleague MPP Todd Smith also crafted Ontario's law for Tamil Heritage Month. And last week he spoke to a motion by Harinder Malhi from Brampton—Springdale with respect to hate and violence against Sikhs. My colleague Todd Smith has travelled the province, working with the Indo-Canadian community, and I'm quite proud of that. He knows that the face of Ontario is changing.

When I came here 18 years ago, Speaker, it was mostly people coming from different parts of Canada to find a job—which is why I am here. I wanted to work on Parliament Hill, and that's why I moved to Ottawa. Eventually, I got elected, and I've now been here for four terms. Most people come here for that reason. But in the last decade or two, that has really shifted.

The changing face of Ontario is—the fact that we do have people coming from around the world, different cultures, different ethnicities. In the city of Ottawa alone—and I'll talk about this later—we have 70 different ethnicities and over 100 languages that are spoken. That's incredibly important.

I want to congratulate my colleague Todd Smith for making sure that he is reaching out to those communities and engaging them. He has done a wonderful job. I'd also be remiss not to acknowledge the great work of my leader, Patrick Brown, in doing the same and making sure that we are changing the face of our own particular political party. I think that's incredibly important.

One of my close friends in this assembly is MPP Ted Arnott. In fact, he's one of the longer-serving members of this House. Ted has been a wonderful mentor to me over the past 11 years, and I really value his friendship. It's Ted Arnott who was responsible for the Emancipation Day Act, recognizing Ontario's role in helping the enslaved and the oppressed. And he was really

instrumental in Lincoln Alexander Day. He has preserved the late, great Lincoln Alexander's memory not only here in this House, but throughout the rest of the province of Ontario.

In fact, we recently had black heritage month, as the minister had mentioned in his remarks to this assembly. I had expected, as the anti-racism critic, that I would be able to give that speech, but no; Ted's deep and abiding relationship with Ontario's black community supersedes that. It was my pleasure to cede the floor to him for him to be able to speak to it, because that is a great passion for him. Again, I want to congratulate my good friend and colleague MPP Ted Arnott.

Finally, I just wanted to acknowledge my former Progressive Conservative leader, Tim Hudak, and my former colleague MPP Peter Shurman, who were both very passionate about defending the State of Israel. Tim had a similar motion on anti-BDS before he left this assembly, and spoke, too, quite openly and candidly and passionately—but also Mr. Shurman, who was successful in having the Legislature condemn Israel Apartheid Week. I remember speaking about this when I was first elected—the hate directed toward Israel and the hate directed toward the Jews of this province. Again, I cannot state enough that the most targeted group according to Toronto police as well as according to Statistics Canada is our Jewish population. Therefore, it is my opinion that we must continue to stand up for them very vocally and very proudly.

Other members of the Progressive Conservative caucus have been instrumental in legislation aimed at Ontario's diversity and ending race-based hate. It is our firm belief that all Ontarians should feel safe and secure in their province, regardless of their religion, race, language, sexual orientation or gender. We will look forward to debating this bill, but also consulting with the race-based communities.

We expect that the government will hold substantial public hearings into this legislation because I think it's important that all of those voices are heard before this becomes law, and that they have their say. It's one thing to do it in public consultations in communities—and I applaud the minister for coming to the city of Ottawa—but I think it's also important that sometimes these conversations get put on the public record. I'm very big on making sure that that's in Hansard to live on so that we remember what has been said and we remember why we are doing it. My appeal to the minister, obviously, is to perhaps let this bill travel a bit. I would welcome him to the city of Ottawa, but also to ensure that there is ample time to give to these communities—who have, for so long, been voiceless—a very prominent voice in the province of Ontario by coming to this assembly and making sure it truly is a people's place.

I told you, Speaker, that I wanted to talk a little bit about the statistics—about the changing face of Ontario and why it's important for us to start this conversation of deeper understanding at this time. The Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership—which I always get wrong, but

its acronym is OLIP, which is just something we're very used to here. We had a wonderful presentation, and we were provided with a wonderful road map of where the city of Ottawa, where I live, is going in terms of our diversity.

Some of the statistics are important because when we have this debate on acceptance, anti-racism and—I don't want to use the word "tolerance." I really don't like that—because I could tolerate you, but I'd rather accept you. I think I'd like to have that changed in our language.

I think she provided us with some interesting statistics. One of the statistics, according to Statistics Canada, is that immigrants and second-generation individuals will represent nearly one in two people, or almost 50% of the population in Ontario. Think about that. In the near future, 50% of our population will either be first or second generation, meaning they've come from somewhere else, and possibly they may be racialized. It's more than likely they will be racialized. And that's just in Canada. Sorry; I thought that was in Ontario.

In Ontario today, that number is higher. We're actually 60% either first generation or second generation. That's quite remarkable when you think about it. People want to make this land their home, and they want to because of the same values, I'm sure, that brought me to this province when I graduated from university.

You know you're going to get good public services. I'll criticize the government from time to time, but I will, broadly speaking, say that in the province of Ontario that I came to, I had good hospitals and good schools and I knew you could get a job. Those might be a little bit debatable these days, but at the end of the day, our values are the values that have beckoned people from around the world and across Canada to come here to start their career, start their family, buy a home and possibly buy an automobile if they live in the suburbs, or even downtown Toronto. They believed, as I did, that you could retire here comfortably.

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Now, again, I can debate other matters that would be off-topic, about some of the criticisms I have in terms of the direction we have politically, but the reality is that at the end of the day, when we step out of this building, we are all Ontarians. We can be Caucasian, we can be black, we can be indigenous, we can be South Asian, but at the end of the day we all walk out of here as, simply put, Ontarians. That's what I think is really important about this legislation.

And it's very important that we always keep up with the statistics that we are given by Statistics Canada. In the same report, some 26% to 30% of the population will have neither English nor French as a mother tongue.

Last week I talked about how my favourite Prime Minister is our founder, Speaker; 150 years ago he had this dream and he had this vision, and we are now today 150 years strong as a country. Yesterday, we commemorated the Battle of Vimy Ridge. We were a very different country at the Battle of Vimy Ridge. We only had eight million people living in this country at that particular

point in time, but my God, we outranked ourselves in terms of heroes. I want to just quickly acknowledge those heroes at Vimy Ridge who we commemorated yesterday.

I think that's important, but I want to go back to 150 years ago, because Sir John A. Macdonald, a proud Scot, just like me, who came and made Ontario his home, said this, and it's my favourite quote: "Let us be English or let us be French ... but above all let us be Canadians." Now, 150 years ago, that was relevant. It didn't include, for example, the indigenous population, and we have been getting a little bit better—not entirely better in this province and in this country yet, but we are going to get there, because we believe in truth and reconciliation.

The other thing, though, is that we have people here in this assembly whose parents' mother tongues might not have been English, French, Mi'kmaq, Algonquin, Cree or whatever languages were spoken 150 years ago. Today we have people coming from all around the world who speak so many different languages. And, Speaker, I've got to tell you something: That makes me so proud.

There used to be a time, when I was a little girl, when I wanted to know at least one person from every single province. That, to me, was a sign of success. As a Canadian, if I knew somebody from each and every province and territory, then I would have made it in the world. Now, today, my daughter doesn't have to have that dream, because she does know lots of people from different parts of Canada. My dream for her is what I get to experience as an MPP, each and every single day: that she gets to know people from around the world—different cultures, different ideas—that she gets to experience that.

I'm going to depart from my script right now, Speaker. My staff are well aware that I often will depart from my script for a bit. I want to talk about what it's like. It's very hard to be a mom in politics, especially when you have to travel, but the benefit that I've had over the past 11 years with my little girl is that she celebrates Chinese New Year, and it's normal for her. She loves it. She loves the colours. She loves the little red pouches she gets. She is experiencing something I never would.

I took her on Saturday—it's always about the food with these kids—to the opening of Ottawa's first Filipino restaurant. She was so excited. I said, "Victoria, we have to leave. We've got to go see Dad." My husband chairs the national capital region of St. John Ambulance. It's excellent work that they do. We had to go see him, and she said, "I don't want to leave. I never want to leave. The food is so good. Can I come back here tomorrow and order spring rolls?" I thought that was interesting, because she got to know the Filipino community, who showed up in droves for this new restaurant.

A couple of weeks ago, we were at an Indo-Canadian event. I think I mentioned this last week, but Speaker, what's incredible about our new High Commissioner of India to Canada is that he actually wrote *Slumdog Millionaire*, the book. He's incredible. It was amazing to be there with him. I told him at the time that I came from

this small town, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, with 10,000 people, and our only two spices were salt and pepper. He had a good laugh, because there are slums in India—and I've been to India—that have millions of people, not 10,000. We had this wonderful conversation.

I wanted to go, and I said to my daughter, "Do you want to come?" She said, "Will there be butter chicken?" I said yes, so she came, and she was dancing Bollywood. It's incredible, the things that we get to do together when we share our ideas.

I may have mentioned this last week, but we went to a traditional Kenyan wedding over the summer, which was very interesting. I'm Scottish, Speaker, as my red hair and my freckles and my last name probably give away, but one of the cool things that I think unites all cultures and religions is our love of food and our love of dance and our love of family. I think that that's incredibly important and one thing that I did want to mention here because that's really important.

We had talked about the number of people who are coming to our province and we talked about the number who have neither English nor French. I want to just talk about the fact that the proportion of the population with visible minority status could rise from 31% to 36% in the province of Ontario. Religious diversity is also expected to increase as we welcome more people to our country.

Now, this is a statistic that I think is very, very important in this debate: According to Statistics Canada, 70% of newcomers to our country are racialized, which is why it's important for us to have this debate in this assembly. I obviously am partial to what is happening in the nation's capital. That's where I'm from; that's where I live. In our population of almost one million, 23%—or 202,000 people—were born outside of Canada. So, of almost one million people in the nation's capital, nearly 20% belong to a visible minority or racialized group, and that is expected to grow to 36% by 2021.

In Ottawa alone, there are more than 100 ethnicities, with more than 70 languages spoken. Can you believe that the world has come to us? I know the wonderful thing that is happening in our city, Speaker. We get to benefit more than anybody else over Canada's 150th because we are the federal seat of Parliament and most of the wonderful things that have happened in our country constitutionally have occurred in our city. But what is remarkable is that in this 150th year we have set up a secretariat inside the city of Ottawa to celebrate Canada's 150th, and in so doing we have these wonderful events like Red Bull Crashed Ice. There's going to be dining between the twin cities of Ottawa and Gatineau.

One of the coolest thing is that we are home to all the world's embassies. I think there are more embassies in Ottawa per capita than anywhere else in the world. What we are doing is, we are opening Aberdeen Pavilion at Lansdowne Park, and different countries are bringing their cuisine and their culture into an event each week. Because we do have so many different people from so many different places in the world, obviously attached to each embassy is a community that they would continue to

work with; for example, India, China, the Philippines, Kenya, Liberia. That's what's happening in the city of Ottawa. That's an incredible thing that makes me so proud, and it makes me happy that my daughter gets to experience all that and gets to see other people.

I want to now turn to Ontario's largest city. I indicated today in question period that although we might only be the second-largest city in Ontario, we have the best hockey team. That would be the Ottawa Senators. We're very happy that the Senators made the playoffs, but we are equally happy that our friends from Toronto—the largest city in the province, our largest city—also saw that their hockey team, the Toronto Maple Leafs, made it. So we're congratulating them. I can tell you something: It doesn't matter where you come from and it doesn't matter where you are going; if you love hockey, there's always an exciting little battle between our two cities.

I want to turn to the city of Toronto. According to the city's website, the 2011 census showed that 49% of those living in Toronto—that's over 1.2 million people—identified as a visible minority—1.2 million people in this city are a visible minority. Thirty-eight per cent of those living in the rest of the GTHA and 19% nationally identified as a visible minority. The region of Peel, however, has the highest percentage of visible minorities in the GTHA, at 57%. More than half of the population in the region of Peel is a visible minority. The world is changing from when Brampton Bill was the Premier of this wonderful province.

The top three visible minorities in Toronto were: South Asian, 12% of the total; Chinese, 11%; and black, 9%. Meanwhile, the city of Toronto website also indicates that the census showed 76% of those living in Toronto identified a religious affiliation: 54% of those living in Toronto identified as Christian; 8% identified as Muslim; 6% identified as Hindu; and 24% had no religious affiliation. So you see that there's a growing diversity there from what our roots would have been predominantly when this country was founded, which would have been Catholic and Protestant.

1400

In my own community where I grew up, there were the Scottish Presbyterians and the Scottish Catholics. My parents married in 1973. I shared this last week. When my parents married, there were people who would refuse to go to their wedding because they were of "mixed race." How stupid is that? They were both Scottish. They came over on the same boat, I'm pretty sure, and one was Catholic and one was Presbyterian. My, have the times ever changed. I shared that one with my daughter as well.

I wanted to also point out that there were almost 20,000 people living in Toronto who identified as aboriginal; 67% were First Nations, which means North American Indian; 25% were Métis; 2% were Inuk or Inuit; and 1% had multiple aboriginal identities.

I want to expand on this. "In 2015," according to the National Post, "Statistics Canada said that the black community were targets of 22% of hate crimes in 2013, remaining the most likely target of hate crimes in Canada

as part of a racial community; meanwhile, Jewish Canadians are the most likely target of religion-motivated hate crime, with 16% of all hate crimes of all types targeting Jewish" communities.

Finally, I have a passage that I want to read from the Toronto Police Hate Crimes Unit, and it says, "The three most targeted groups since 2006 have been the Jewish community, the black community and the" LGBTQ "community. In 2015, the Jewish community, followed by the LGBTQ community and the Muslim community were the most victimized groups. The three most reported criminal offences motivated by hate/bias in 2015 were mischief to property, assault and criminal harassment." Think about that. The three most reported—and that's just reported, Speaker. It doesn't mean that that is what has happened the most; it means it's the most reported. The most reported were mischief to property, assault and criminal harassment.

I recently watched a video—I had a group from the Muslim community come in and meet with me two weeks ago. They had been working on an ad. It left me in tears. They told me that it had actually happened. The family had been out for the day. They drove in the driveway, and it said, "Go home." I can't imagine driving into my driveway, with my child in my vehicle, and seeing that scrawled on my home. But that happened, and that's wrong and we have to condemn it. We should not, and cannot, allow that to continue. We've got to make sure that we understand that mischief to property may not invoke bodily harm, but mischief to property and vandalism—putting a swastika or calling someone the N-word or whatever it is will harm, the feeling of safety and security that we expect all of our residents in this province to feel. I wanted to put that out there.

I want to get into the meat of this bill. The Liberals will be formalizing the Anti-Racism Secretariat and its three year anti-racism strategy that is the compendium to this bill. If you read this bill, Speaker, you see a lot of legalese, but what it's really doing is, it's going to ensconce the government's three-year anti-racism strategy within the bill. There will be a lot of reviews, which I'll talk about.

The strategy intends to eliminate racism, to advance racial equality and to measure the strategy's effectiveness, in particular for the indigenous and black communities within Ontario public service organizations which are funded over \$1 million by the province of Ontario. The minister will prepare progress reports. Every five years, there will be a review of the strategy, in consultation with stakeholders whom the minister deems appropriate.

I have a question on how the minister deems who is appropriate and who is not. That is a question that I will have for the government, and hopefully the government will come back to me and let me know who they deem is appropriate. There are many different organizations out there, and I'm sure they would all like to have their say. I hope the government is open to all of these different organizations so that they can all have their say.

The minister will establish data collection and monitor systemic racism throughout the public service, in consultation with the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

When I was briefed on this piece of legislation by the minister's office, that was a concern that I had—to ensure that this information was going to be properly protected, that personal information would not be compromised, and to ensure that we are following appropriate laws with respect to that. This is a concern I have, and I hope I can be confident, if this bill is to pass, that this personal information's privacy will be protected.

Presently, personal health records are exempt from this data, and an amendment will be forthcoming. I don't know when that will be forthcoming. Will it be forthcoming during deliberations when this goes to committee, during clause-by-clause? Or will it be coming down the road? My understanding, speaking with ministerial officials, is that this could take up to six months. Therefore, that means it would not be included in this round. So I think it would be important to provide that information as well.

Public service organizations may disclose data to researchers if there is an application in writing and if the research has public or scientific benefit and is approved by a research ethics board.

This was another area where I questioned the minister's staff, just to ensure that people's information wasn't going to be given out. They have assured me that due to algorithms and different protections, that information would not be compromised. I still have to be convinced. It has nothing to do with this bill, but I have been here long enough to see some very big challenges this government has had with data. Remember, we are talking about the same crew that bungled eHealth—a data system—and this is the same crew that decided they were going to shred documents and evade the privacy commissioner and, finally, wipe out hard drives. They need to be very clear with me on how this is going to be protected, so people's personal information is not compromised.

It does say that breaches of FIPPA and MFIPPA, which are the information privacy act and the municipal information privacy act, would come with a fine of up to \$100,000. That's good to hear.

The minister will establish an anti-racism impact assessment framework which assesses racial inequality and reviews and revises policies and programs to remedy or prevent inequality. This will include public notice and reporting. Public reporting will be published on the government of Ontario website.

So there is a level of transparency and accountability, but let me assure you of something, Speaker. I've been here—this is not my first rodeo. I remember that the government had promised they were going to do a review of the LHINs, and it took forever. So can we naturally assume or trust that they will follow through with this? What if the minister changes, and one minister is really invested and then the other minister isn't? These are some questions that must be asked and must be answered.

I'm now at the point where I've laid out what is in the bill. I've laid out, I believe, the context of why we need to have this conversation and the debate in this assembly, because of the changing face of the province of Ontario, as well as some of the systemic issues that we all rightfully acknowledge.

Speaker, the previous Speaker was in here when I first spoke to this, but you will be happy to note that I talked about your contribution to the black community in the province of Ontario with respect to the Emancipation Day Act. I think—and you would probably agree with me; I think most members would agree with me—that as times change, we also have to change. We can't continue to use old thinking and old approaches. I think we need to think about the changing times and what those challenges mean to us, and those demands placed upon us.

As I said, I have never seen a piece of legislation be perfect—except for, of course, Rowan's Law, which I put forward. Speaker, I'm just teasing. I've never seen a piece of legislation be perfect. I've never seen a piece of legislation that didn't have an amendment. I've never seen a piece of legislation that, after it was passed, was never amended. I think we always have to be open to that.

1410

The plan does focus a lot on the black, indigenous and Muslim communities, but it is very weak on the protections for Ontario's Jewish population, which both the 2011 census and the Toronto police hate crimes unit say is the community which is most targeted by hate in the province. We know anti-Semitism runs deep and should be acknowledged, along with other targeted groups, in a similar vein in the three-year plan. I realize that we are not going to be voting on the three-year plan, but I realize as well that this is an important piece. I want to see the Jewish community incorporated in this.

I would be remiss not to say, Speaker, at the very beginning of this debate last week, I was to have shared my time with my colleague Mr. Cho from Scarborough-Rouge River, but he has his own 20-minute rotation. I wanted to put that on the record for the Clerk's office. He will be up after me in a bit.

I just wanted to say, the three-year plan also mentioned specific tables for certain communities and changes to our education system, which are not explicitly mentioned in the legislation, which, again, excludes the Ontario Jewish community. Again, I'm having a rough time with this. I spoke with representatives from a couple of different Jewish communities in the last week, and I think this is something they would be concerned about. They have reached out, I know, through the press. I saw a couple of articles in the newspaper after I had spoken with them.

Actually, I used the old Google this weekend and just said, "Okay, was there any coverage on this when it came out?" Indeed, members of Ontario's Jewish community are concerned and, rightfully, there are other groups that are included in this. I don't take away from that, but I do

take exception to the fact that the Jewish community is not either explicitly mentioned in this legislation or more in the government's three-year plan. It took nine pages, in fact, to use the word "anti-Semitism." So I do have a significant concern there.

I have been to mosques, synagogues and churches where individuals have chosen not to report some of the hate, the graffiti and the vandalism they have experienced, in order not to scare others. So when I look at what's most reported, I recognize as well that's not exactly what's happening. I said that a little bit earlier, but I wanted to put that on the record and be very clear that there does need to be more protection for our Ontario Jewish community, which is vibrant and which has done a great deal of philanthropy and good in this province.

Finally, I just wanted to say I do have a concern with the privacy measures outlined throughout the bill itself. Perhaps they can be allayed when I have a greater conversation with the minister and he can assure me that people's privacy will not be breached. With the collection of private information on race-based incidents, the government must take great care to ensure there aren't any privacy breaches. The Ontario PC caucus is most interested in learning how the government intends to protect these from breaches.

That said, I think it's important that we do track this, particularly in our public services. It's important that we have actual facts and data and statistics as we move forward because the best way for us to address racial inequality or hate based on religion is to know it exists, that it continues to exist, where it exists, and what type of it is existing so that we can best address it, whether that is through our public services, through our education system and our health care or with our police. I think that's important.

I've read a David Reevley column; I don't have it with me at the moment, but, in essence, at the end of his article, he said that it's about time we're starting to do this. Perhaps I should have brought that down with me.

That's where I believe we have some deficiencies, but perhaps the government can let me know that they are working on this or they are addressing it or that I could be allayed in any of those ways.

Again, it is a pleasure to rise on behalf of the Ontario PC caucus and our leader, Patrick Brown. In 2017, 150 years after the great Sir John A. Macdonald founded this country, 150 years after we started meeting in places like this—well, we were already meeting in places like this, but as one federation—150 years after the great Prime Minister said, "Let us be English or let us be French ... but above all let us be Canadians," there is no room for hate. This country was not founded on hate. This country was not founded for any other reason but for hope and prosperity, so that people around the world would consider this their home. This country was founded on equal opportunity.

Let me say this, and I'll say it to the pages—I'm getting a little grey, okay? But here's the thing: Not everybody was equal when we founded this country. Not

everyone had the opportunity, even though that was the desire at the time. Our indigenous population was not considered equal. Women didn't have the right to vote. Slavery existed in this country. The earliest known slave was in the 1600s. So as glorious as we are and as proud as we are as Canadians; as much as we've liberated the people of France; with the wonderful work that we've done to ensure that little girls in Afghanistan get to go to school; as wonderful as we are at passing legislation and all of us having the abilities that we do today, Canada has a history—some of it's not all that great, but most of it is. So when you leave here after your three- or four-week stint, I want you to go back to your communities as proud Canadians and proud Ontarians. I want you to know that you've become friends with people who are different than you and come from different places.

Let me just say this—I have four minutes left, and this really doesn't have much to do with the bill other than that it talks about diversity. We come from 107 different places in this province—well, some of us come from more places; I come from Nova Scotia originally. We all have 107 different ridings, and our ridings are very different. My colleague from Parry Sound—Muskoka, who's right behind me, represents one of the most picturesque places outside of Ottawa in all of the province of Ontario. He would have a greater indigenous population than I would.

I represent the nation's capital, the city of Ottawa. I represent one of the fastest-growing communities of anybody in here, and I represent people who come from all over the world, a more diverse population than my colleague.

I have other colleagues here. My colleague France Gélinas from Nickel Belt represents a very large, very rural riding. It's so big—I'm not sure how big it is, but I can tell you that there are a lot of francophones in her community. I've been to it and I've visited it with her, and she has a large francophone population, but she also has a large indigenous population.

In the place where we are right now, in this Legislative Assembly, we are debating with one another. We all have shared experiences, but we also have different experiences.

I see my colleague Harinder Malhi. Her dad was a federal member of Parliament, and here she is today in his footsteps. She and I are very similar in the sense that, like Laurie Scott—and, I'm sure, others in this assembly—our fathers were the first ones to get elected, and then we followed our dads' footsteps. Our grandmothers might not have had the right to vote when they were our age.

So we are a country of great possibilities. We are a country that was founded with the best of intentions. We are a country that has made some mistakes along the way, but who hasn't? We look around the world and we see that there are major atrocities that we want to stand against.

We stood against the Holocaust. My grandfather went and fought in that war. I can't ever underestimate the import-

ance of the men and women who went to Afghanistan to liberate little girls. That's so important, that they can go to school today.

We see what's happening in Syria, and we are welcoming refugees into our country. My daughter's school alone has 120 kids who came from Syria. We are a country that responds to our own internal challenges but also to world challenges.

So if I could say one thing to our dear friends who are about to leave us on Thursday to go back to their respective communities, it's to stay in touch, hear the other side and always know that if you make a mistake, it's never too late to say you're sorry and to try and fix it.

With this legislation, I'll cede the floor, but not without first saying what a pleasure it is to have a conversation on how we can reach more people and how we can be positive in our communities rather than always talking about things that are negative. That is why I think this is an important hour for me to have had and why I think it's important for everybody else to be part of this discussion.

But that doesn't mean that we have to fundamentally agree on all aspects of everything. So I'll leave you with this: We must not necessarily accept other people's points of view, but we always must respect them.

1420

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was very interesting to listen to the member basically put into words what it would look like if Ontario provided anti-racism measures, and what it could be.

She went through some of the ways that we could improve the bill, and I want to do the same thing. I'm on page 4 of the bill. It talks about the regulations, in section 6(5):

"The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations,

"(a) requiring public sector organizations to collect... information...;

"(b) authorizing public sector organizations to collect ... personal information"—and it goes on—basically so that we can quantify the problem and work on anti-racism measures.

But it goes on to say:

"Exclusion relating to health information custodians

"(7) A regulation made under clause (5)(a) or (b) does not apply to a public sector organization in relation to a program, service or function if the organization, in providing that program or service, or carrying out that function, is a health information custodian, as defined in the Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004."

This is very problematic, because the community health centres, the aboriginal health access centres, the nurse practitioner-led clinics and the community-based family health teams all already collect that type of information and have been for years. Now, through this regulation, through this bill, they won't be allowed to do that anymore.

They have been at the forefront of fighting racism. They have been some of the heroes in that fight. I think there's a mistake in this bill that needs to be corrected.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: We want to be open and transparent about our work through public reporting and meaningful engagement and collaboration with indigenous and racialized communities to inform government decision-making.

Under the proposed legislation, the government would be required to maintain a renewable, multi-year anti-racism strategy. This strategy must include initiatives and targets, as well as indicators that are reported on annually, to measure the effectiveness of the strategy. At least every five years, the anti-racism strategy would need to be reviewed in consultation with community partners and other stakeholders.

We're committed to maintaining a tangible framework and anti-racism strategy to work towards building a more just, inclusive and equitable province for everyone.

This would require the minister, during any consultations on the strategy, to consult with members and representatives of communities that are most adversely impacted by systemic racism, including the indigenous and black communities.

That doesn't mean that, for any reason, we have left out any community. The proposed legislation explicitly names indigenous and black communities, because evidence shows that these communities experience especially critical forms of systemic racism and inequitable outcomes.

However, the proposed legislation recognizes that other groups may be adversely impacted by systemic racism. This includes racism based on religious or cultural background.

A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-Year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan commits to implementing public education and awareness initiatives to make people aware that anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are unacceptable.

The Anti-Racism Directorate has engaged with the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs—CIJA—the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and the National Council of Canadian Muslims, among other groups, and they are supportive of the direction of the ARD's three-year anti-racism strategic plan.

The ARD will continue to engage with communities and partner ministries to develop public education and awareness initiatives that aim to mitigate and prevent anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments? The member for Perth—Wellington.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to rise here today to discuss Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures.

I want to congratulate my colleague from Nepean—Carleton for her hour-long leadoff. She brings a lot of experience and certainly a lot of knowledge about this subject, as she does many others.

Hate is hate. No one should ever feel unfairly targeted because of their race, religion or heritage. As our leader, Patrick Brown, likes to say, it doesn't matter who you love, where you're from or where you worship; you have a home in Ontario.

The Ontario PC caucus has a long track record of condemning hate, defending human rights and opposing racism. For example, my colleague from Thornhill succeeded in having our Legislature condemn anti-Semitism and the BDS movement. My colleague from Prince Edward—Hastings helped to create the Tamil Heritage Month. And, Mr. Speaker, someone who you have an intimate knowledge of, the MPP from Wellington—Halton Hills, passed the Emancipation Day Act, which recognized Ontario's role in helping the enslaved.

In the Ontario PC caucus, we support measures to condemn racism and improve racial equality. We are proud of our track record in standing up for the equality of all citizens.

As for the legislation, we think there is room for improvement and we look forward to being part of the discussion and debate on the bill moving forward. In particular, I look forward to seeing what comes out of what are hopefully substantive public hearings.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Teresa J. Armstrong: I'm very grateful that I have the opportunity to make a couple of questions and comments in this short time and to congratulate the member from Nepean—Carleton on her lead-off on this bill.

Racism is very real. It has been around for a very long time. It's good to see that this bill has been brought forward. It is establishing a framework so that we can actually approach and tackle racism in such a way as to research some metrics to define if it's working.

Also, the part I do appreciate in this bill is that there is going to be a five-year review. I hope that review will be very intense into each area that the government has committed to. They want to do the policy and research evaluations, sustainability and accountability, public education and awareness.

It's a systemic issue. I can go on about some of the details they are going to cover, but the bottom line is, it's something that is well overdue. We need to take this bill very, very seriously because it affects people's lives in the most egregious way. We need to look at it in the education sector; we need to look at it in the social service area; we need to look at it in the health sector. It resonates through every ministry, I think, in this Legislature. We need to have this lens focusing on every policy that we legislate and debate. It needs to go through that filter to make sure we are not part of that systemic racism that we say we're actually going to deal with when it comes to this legislation.

It's something that I look forward to being in place. It has been a long time coming; I have to say that, Speaker. It's been 10 years, and that's disappointing. But, yes, it's here now, and we're glad it's going to come into legislation. I hope it is going to be sooner than later.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. I return to the member for Nepean—Carleton.

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: If I may say thank you to my colleagues from Nickel Belt, Brampton—Springdale, Perth—Wellington and London—Fanshawe for their contributions in the questions and comments. I certainly understand that we do have some concerns. The New Democrats have some concerns. The government, of course, says everything is perfect. That is the role of our parliamentary democracy.

If I may, I really didn't want to take the time to mostly criticize the bill, because I think—and that's what our job is, to be perfectly clear. But I wanted, within the hour that I had, to speak about what unites us, what we agree on, rather than the divisions that we sometimes inherently see in the province and in our country from time to time. I wanted to take the opportunity to talk about what is wonderful—not to gloss over things, certainly not to do that, but I wanted to provide some positivity to this debate. I hope I was able to do that.

It certainly was worthwhile for me. I had a great weekend where I—you know I go off the cuff, Speaker, but I did put three pages of notes together today just to make sure, because there were things that I wanted to get out. I did it on Saturday night with my daughter. I know I talk way too much—I'm one of those proud parents who talks too much about her child. As I look at my dear friends the pages, I aspire for her to be one next year. It would be wonderful if she could join me.

1430

Again, it was a real pleasure to be able to be here today to discuss Bill 114 and to speak on behalf of my leader, Patrick Brown, as well as my colleagues in the Progressive Conservative caucus.

I look forward to listening to the debate this afternoon. I look forward to seeing this bill in committee. I look forward to the government encouraging all stakeholders to be part of this big conversation that we are presently enjoying in the House today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Miss Monique Taylor: I seek unanimous consent to stand down the NDP lead on this bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Hamilton Mountain is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to have the lead speech for the New Democrats stood down. Agreed? Agreed.

Member for Hamilton Mountain.

Miss Monique Taylor: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the leniency of the House to allow us to do this.

I just want to say that I'm pleased to have the opportunity to be able to speak today to Bill 114, the Anti-Racism Act. The bill provides a legislative framework needed to carry out recent and ongoing commitments of the government to addressing systemic racism in Ontario.

This legislation would require the minister to provide a public progress report on targets set in the three-year

anti-racism strategy, of which we are now in the second year. This report is to be done within 12 months of that part of the act coming into force.

The legislation would require the government to review its strategy every five years. Our view is that would include a round of public consultations.

Section 4 requires that after a review is completed, the government of Ontario shall either amend the strategy, replace the strategy with a new one, or continue with the existing strategy.

Data standards would be put in place to collect, use and manage information, including personal information. With a view to eliminating systemic racism and advancing racial equity, the data would identify racial disparities and systemic racism.

At the same time, the act points out that no person will be denied access to services, programs or benefits if they refuse to provide the information that is being collected.

The Information and Privacy Commissioner will have the opportunity to review the practices being used to collect and use personal information, and can make orders and/or recommendations on privacy implications.

The legislation also provides for an anti-racism impact assessment framework.

Speaker, you will know that the NDP has been calling for serious work to be done to combat systemic racism for many years. Way back in 1991 we announced the Anti-Racism Strategy for Ontario. It consisted of five components:

- an Ontario anti-racism policy;
- an Ontario public sector anti-racism strategy;
- public consultations;
- an Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat; and
- an Ontario anti-racism strategy group.

The anti-racism secretariat was tasked with addressing persistent racial and other related inequities in Ontario.

The former race relations directorate, a department within the then Ministry of Citizenship, was formed into the Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat. This was significant in two ways: The new secretariat's mandate shifted towards a proactive approach to actively fighting racism, primarily through public education; and the secretariat was given authority to fund specific minority groups engaged in anti-racism.

You'll have to excuse me, Speaker. I have a bit of a head cold happening, so I'll have to keep drinking.

The secretariat was given authority to fund specific minority groups engaged in anti-racism.

Unfortunately, the Conservatives, when they came into office under Mike Harris, disbanded the Anti-Racism Secretariat. They absorbed its work and staff into the ministry and cancelled \$3 million in anti-racism grants that helped ethnic groups set up education programs and improve relations with the police. It's unfortunate that that happened, Speaker, but several things happened in this province under Mike Harris that people seem to forget.

In 2006, the Liberal government introduced Bill 107, An Act to amend the Human Rights Code. Among other

things, the bill provided the Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission with the authority to create an anti-racism secretariat. The secretariat would be composed of six or fewer people appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council on the advice of the chief commissioner. Under the direction of the chief commissioner, it would research discriminatory practices on the basis of race and make recommendations to prevent and eliminate those practices. It would develop public information and education programs.

Bill 107 attracted strong criticisms from many community-based organizations working with people with disabilities and racialized communities. It shifted toward a system that placed the onus on individual victims of discrimination to investigate and prosecute their own cases, from a system that had been based on public investigation and enforcement of human rights. Despite this criticism, the Liberal government used its majority to abruptly stop the legislative hearing process and pass the bill without further public consultation.

In 2015, the NDP called for a new anti-racism secretariat to be created and that a task force be struck that would examine issues of systemic racism in the province. In commenting about the Premier's response to that call for an anti-racism secretariat, one person said in the Share newspaper: "The concept of systemic racism exists because the people who create policy, for example, do not realize or recognize the barriers that are in-bred in those policies. In my mind, one of the duties of the secretariat would be to establish a consistent anti-racism lens through which policies would be screened—how would this policy affect racialized persons/families?"

In February of last year, the Anti-Racism Directorate was established by the government. While it was welcomed, we felt quite strongly that it fell short of what we had proposed. I believe that Bill 114 is a welcome step to address racism in Ontario.

Speaker, over the past couple of weeks I have taken part in the public hearings on Bill 89. A number of those who presented talked about the same issues this bill is concerned with. I put it to you that the conversation on Bill 114 cannot ignore the conversation that is currently happening on Bill 89. I hope that it is helpful that the same minister has carriage of both bills because they inform one another. How we address the issues faced by today's children will inevitably have a significant impact in the years and decades to come.

We have heard from representatives of our First Nations communities and our African Canadian community. These communities are particularly concerned because their children are dramatically overrepresented in the child welfare system. In Toronto, 8% of those under 18 are black, yet 42% of children in care have at least one black parent. That is five times their representation in the general population. Statistics Canada has reported that 48% of all children in child welfare systems across Canada are indigenous children. Here in Ontario, the Council of the Federation reported to Canada's Premiers in 2015 that 21% of children in care were

indigenous, yet they make up only 3% of Ontario's child population. Those are numbers that have been gleaned from various sources because there is nothing in the Child and Family Services Act that allows for the collection of information that would give us the true, full picture. That is something that Bill 89 seeks to address—the collection of information—although the Information and Privacy Commissioner has also spoken to the committee, raising several concerns about the wording currently in the bill.

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These numbers tell a very important and very worrying story about what puts children who are subject to systemic racism at such a severe disadvantage. As we can see from the previous short history I gave, this is not a new phenomenon. It has been happening for years, and people from those communities have been telling us about it for years. The question is, have we been listening?

Let me read from the submission of the Association of Native Child and Family Services Agencies of Ontario:

"ANCFSAO notes that while Bill 89 proposes some amendments that may improve the ability of its members to effectively serve indigenous children, there remain numerous profound obstacles for our members under the CFSA in developing and implementing best practices. In its 2015 submissions regarding the CFSA, the ANCFSAO made several recommendations for amendments to the act the adoption of which would, in our view, materially improve the quality and effectiveness of services provided to indigenous children by all societies in the province. The most important of these recommendations appear to have been ignored in the provisions of Bill 89."

The Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres made a submission—which followed on from A Collaborative Submission Regarding the Child and Family Services Act—to the 2015 review of the Child and Family Services Act. In it, they said:

"The bill's preamble outlines the need for child-centred, strengths-based and prevention-focused supports which respond to concerns that friendship centre communities have raised for decades.

"This points to a positive departure from the current legislation, but ultimately falls short of a meaningful response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action, The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and the Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy."

Of particular interest to this discussion of Bill 114, they said that the act does not adequately address, nor contextualize, the underlying issues of systemic racism, poverty and cultural disintegration that spur indigenous involvement. In particular, they say that the effect of poverty on family well-being is altogether ignored within the proposed legislation.

The Black Community Action Network of Peel presented to the committee. This is an organization that represents a network of over 400 organizations, profes-

sionals, residents and allies who are united in a mission to promote equity-focused systems change and community empowerment through advocacy, community organizing and development, leadership development, and community education and research. Here is part of what they had to say in their submission:

"Although the bill presents an historic opportunity to transform youth services and promote greater equity within the province, the current version fails to address critical issues for African Canadians."

They continue to point out: "African Canadians face a unique context of systemic anti-black racism in Canada, reflected by a history of enslavement, racial segregation and marginalization, the major over-representation of African Canadian youth in child welfare and youth justice systems, as well as inequities in employment, education, housing and other domains of well-being."

As I mentioned, Speaker, it is informative of the work that must be done to tackle racism.

Sadly, we are all too aware of racism in our communities. A few weeks ago, we had the protracted case of the York region school board trustee who directed a racial slur at a parent. That situation continued for weeks as the trustee refused to step down. Not surprisingly, the parent wanted the trustee removed from the board, but as an elected official, there was no avenue for that to happen. Eventually, the trustee resigned from the board after a lot of pressure from many sides.

The parent in that case, a mother of three young children, has now launched a human rights complaint about what she calls "deeply entrenched systemic barriers that parents face when they seek to challenge racism" at York Region District School Board.

This is the type of situation we would hope that an anti-racism strategy would seek to address and correct.

A few weeks ago, a home in Port Colborne was vandalized because the daughter of the homeowner was dating a classmate who happened to be black. We know the reason because, in addition to the other damages, the vandals painted "N... lover," with the N-word spelled out, on his daughter's bedroom wall. That was another shocking example of racism in our communities.

On March 31, Justice Michael Tulloch presented his report on the Independent Police Oversight Review. This review was ordered after public demonstrations by Black Lives Matter and others over dissatisfaction with policing and police oversight. I want to read some quotes from his report:

"The relationship between the police and the communities they serve is at times very complex. This relationship must be situated within its historical context in our modern, pluralistic society. For some communities, particularly black and indigenous communities, historical realities have led to a distrust of the police, a distrust that sometimes extends to the oversight bodies" as well.

"In my view, developing cultural competency is crucial to address systemic issues that have hindered positive indigenous engagement with the oversight bodies.

"Understanding the context of indigenous-police relations is essential...."

His point about developing cultural competency is crucial to any anti-racism strategy and is most definitely not limited to police oversight. It is true for every government department.

Justice Tulloch points out that this should not just be about learning about indigenous peoples. It also is about recruiting and developing indigenous staff, and it requires applying a culturally competent approach to service delivery.

He said this in relation to indigenous peoples, but in our multicultural society it is important to be reflected for other marginalized communities as well.

With regard to his consultation process and the review, Justice Tulloch said this: "To me, context is always of critical importance. Accordingly, it was very important for this review to include the voices of as many people as possible. I therefore committed to holding an open, extensive, and accommodating consultation process."

How very true that is, Speaker, when we are trying to understand and correct systemic racism. Systemic racism doesn't exist because people are bad; it exists because those making or changing the rules don't understand how the rules affect some people. It exists because of rules made in years gone by and carried forward without an appreciation of the damage that they have done in the past.

We definitely know that racism has existed in our province and in our country for many, many years. Unfortunately, in the last couple of years we have seen that heightened to an extreme extent. We have a newly elected president across the border who has, I believe, stirred an underbelly of racism right here in our very own backyard.

In Hamilton, which is my home city, as you know, several issues have happened. We have women who have been verbally attacked for wearing hijabs. We have had mosques that have had fire thrown at them and caused damage—thankfully, minimal.

We have seen rallies of people from the Canadian Coalition for Concerned Citizens, thinking that they're going to put together rallies in front of city hall to fight against Islam. Thankfully, the people in my city stood up to that and countered that rally by more than doubling their presence and just washing them out on our steps of city hall, ensuring that people know that racism is not going to be accepted in my city. I'm really proud of the work that has happened in my city.

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We have the Hamilton Centre for Civic Inclusion, which was born right after 9/11. At that time, a Hindu Samaj temple was burned to the ground by people who didn't realize that they weren't burning down a mosque, as they thought. They were counteracting 9/11, and it was absolutely awful. But out of that has come good work in our city.

I know I'm running out of time, but I know I will have a couple of minutes after, to talk about some of the things that happened there.

Something very important that I want to point out is that Statistics Canada data—this is from 2015—showed that Hamilton was Canada's second-highest city for hate crime per capita. That's a scary statistic. I'm so thankful for the many people who fight racism in the city of Hamilton, and I'm going to touch base on them just a little bit after the comments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you very much. Questions and comments?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: The anti-racism impact assessment framework is a policy tool to understand, mitigate, remedy and prevent inequitable impacts and outcomes of a ministry or organization's programs and policies on different groups. The framework is a proactive method to build an anti-racism approach into government policy development and into the government policy development process. It's designed to anticipate and remove potential biases in public services and policies where they are leading to racial inequities. The proposed legislation requires the ARIA framework to provide for research and analysis of stakeholder consultations. They will be working with other ministries like children and youth services, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Correctional Services.

We've all had experiences like the one that my colleague just spoke to, of the mandir being burned down in her riding, with people not knowing. We've had a number of incidents like that in Brampton, and we come from a very diverse community. The community I represent is extremely diverse. We have a number of mandirs, mosques and gurdwaras in my riding. We have churches in my riding. It's really sad to see when these things happen due to ignorance, like you said. I can't agree more with you that it's so important for us to go ahead with this anti-racism policy and put it into place so it can't be taken away, so that we can work toward an equitable society for everyone.

We need to focus on those groups that are being targeted, and that's what this legislation does. Not only does it focus on those two groups, but it is legislation for everybody. It does include other groups. We will be consulting; the minister will be consulting. As well, every five years, there will be an opportunity to consult.

I want to say that I think racism is something that hits all of our communities, that hits us all at home. Coming from a racialized group, I do understand the impacts that it can have on communities as a whole and on individuals.

We look forward to this legislation passing so that we can make a better Ontario for everyone.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: I want to say thank you to my colleague—I want to get her riding correct—from Hamilton Mountain. I referenced a couple of the incidents, that have become public from her community, toward the Jewish community.

I think it bears repeating that we talk about the changing face of Ontario. I know she did that, and I think

that's what we're going to see happen and occur over the next little while.

According to Stats Canada, immigrants and second-generation individuals together could represent nearly one in two people, or 50%, of the population. In Ontario, that number is much higher. Some 60% of our population is either first- or second-generation Canadian. Some 26% to 30% of the population will speak neither English nor French as a mother tongue. The proportion of the population with visible minority status could rise from 31% to 36%, and religious diversity is expected to increase.

I know the member from Brampton-Springdale just talked about the diversity in her community.

This is very important for people who may not represent a riding such as mine, which is large, diverse and fast-growing. This is very important for people to know: 70% of newcomers to the province of Ontario are racialized, according to the Ottawa Local Immigration Partnership. In the nation's capital, in my city, 23% or 202,000 people were born outside of Canada, and nearly 20% of them belong to a visual minority or a racialized group. So it's very important, when we're having this discussion, that people recognize that Ontario has changed a great deal in many of our urban communities and therefore we need to have this discussion in this assembly.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Peggy Sattler: It's a pleasure for me to rise, as MPP for London West, to speak on behalf of the people I represent and also to congratulate my colleague the member for Hamilton Mountain on her remarks on Bill 114, the Anti-Racism Act.

One of the things she highlighted in her speech was around the numbers—the shocking numbers—of black children in care and indigenous children in care in this province and in this country. That shows the power of data. Therefore, the provisions of this bill around data standards for the collection, use and management of information are critically important. We know, for example, that the Toronto District School Board and People for Education have done research about the impact of streaming on racialized young people in our schools. One of the findings of People for Education's research is that for a black youth in a Toronto high school, taking one applied-level course in grade 9 means almost no chance—no chance at all—of going on to university. And we know that the students who are being streamed in grade 9 into taking applied-level courses are overwhelmingly more likely to be black and indigenous students.

When we are able to collect that kind of data, those statistics, we understand the systemic barriers that limit opportunities, that limit potential for black children, black families, black people, indigenous families and youth across this province. That's why we need to have this mechanism. It is important. But what's more important is what is done with that data once it is collected. We need to have the full involvement of indigenous and black communities in understanding how to use that data.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I'm pleased to recognize the minister responsible for anti-racism.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Again, it's a pleasure to stand to speak on this issue. I believe that this proposed piece of legislation is something that is a game-changer for Ontario. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it's the first of its kind in the entire country.

This is very different from what the NDP did in the 1990s. I know the member from Hamilton Mountain made reference to that. This is building a directorate that is backed by legislation, that is going to focus on disaggregated data. It is going to use policy tools in order to look for solutions.

I've been out there. I've talked to people. The member opposite just made reference to the Toronto District School Board's use of data. Well, I was the one who moved the motion at the Toronto District School Board back in 2006 to start collecting data. I've been having these conversations for the last decade-plus.

It's interesting: This is the first time that we've talked about race in regard to what's happening in the black community—I've been here for six years. I think this is probably the first time where we've had a collective conversation about this issue. The member next to me, the member for Durham—we were just talking about what it's like to be a black man in Ontario. He was saying that a car drove by and in passing he heard the N-word shouted out as he was walking. It's happened to me also.

So we want to have these conversations because we know that they're important for the future generations of Ontarians. And this is not just about multiculturalism, diversity and inclusion work. This is anti-racism work. There is a scientific aspect to it. It's about looking at data, making policy decisions based on the best information we have. I think this is the best piece of legislation that has come out of this country to try to tackle systemic racism, and I think we should all be proud and we should be supporting this piece of legislation as it works its way through the Legislature.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. The member for Hamilton Mountain can now reply.

1500

Miss Monique Taylor: I agree with the minister that this is a conversation that definitely needs to be had. We know that our communities need for us to have this conversation. But we have to be in our communities doing the work at the same time. When we hear of things that aren't acceptable, we have to stand up and we have to say that it's not okay to say those things. When people say it's in fun, well, they're just breeding that continual hatred. We see this very clearly on Facebook and social media, how those mediums have really allowed racism to breed very quickly. When we're looking at this stuff, we really always have to be conscious about how we stop the guy next door from throwing out the extra joke "because it's funny," because those things just aren't funny anymore.

We have to start with our children, making sure that when our children grow up in healthy communities they become healthy adults, and those terms just will not be part of their vocabulary. We have to take those steps and ensure that refugees coming into our country feel safe and secure, and that they aren't being blamed for what's happening in their home, which is what made them run away from it in the first place.

While I was looking for things to talk about on this bill, I ran into a post that had some pictures of people holding signs that said, "Being a refugee is not a choice. It is in the absence of a choice." "One planet, one people." "Please, we are one. Protect the rights of refugees."

Thank you for allowing me the time to speak today, Speaker.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order: I recognize the minister for anti-racism.

Hon. Michael Coteau: Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a moment to wish the member from Kingston and the Islands a happy birthday.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): It's technically not a point of order, but we wish the member many happy returns. Happy birthday.

Further debate?

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you very much to the minister for that very kind good wish for my birthday.

I will be sharing my time today with the MPP for Barrie as well as the President of the Treasury Board.

It really is a tremendous pleasure to stand to talk about this very, very important piece of legislation. I think that it has a different kind of importance for each one of our ridings, but I think that at the core it says the same thing. It is extremely important that we bring everything we have forward in discussing this extremely important bill and make sure that we create the most just and fair society possible.

The government has taken a leadership role in working toward eliminating systemic racism with a strategy to break down those barriers for indigenous, black and racialized communities, and improve their outcomes. There's no doubt that when we remove those barriers for the most disadvantaged, we improve our institutions and communities, leading to a greater trust and confidence in public services, and a better Ontario for everyone.

Just think about it for a moment, what it means to go to a university such as Queen's University, for example, as a black youth or as a youth of colour—any kind of colour—any different type of religion, perhaps going as a Muslim student wearing a hijab, as has already been mentioned, and not feeling like they were listened to, not feeling like their voice counted, and worse still, hearing racist comments. Obviously, you're going to be at a disadvantage. You're not going to feel welcome, you're not going to feel comfortable in the classroom and you're not going to be the best that you can possibly be.

Queen's University has been working on this for some time now. They have had a diversity and equity task

force that they've been working on, and they have included within that task force multiple committees and different reports. I just want to read a few of the different types of reports so you get an idea of how encompassing they have been in their own approach to this problem.

They have looked at non-code harassment. They have incorporated a study on Jack.org. They have looked at the implementation on prevention and response to sexual violence. They have incorporated mental health into their studies. There are numerous students at Queen's University, such as Meghan Brooks, who did a thesis in 2014 titled Effective Institutionalized Antiracism: Negotiating Backlash, Neoliberalization and Geopolitics—fantastic. They have done an awful lot of work in this area, and it's extremely important that we acknowledge them for doing so. It's not easy.

To illustrate our government's commitment to anti-racism, we have started working right in our own backyard. The proposed legislation requires the development of new tools for ministries and public sector organizations—such as Queen's, St. Lawrence College, Royal Military College—to use to promote systemic fair treatment of all people. This includes the requirement for the development of data collection standards and to promote and standardize the collection and analysis of race-based data. Legislation needs to be evidence-based. You simply cannot write good legislation without having that background.

I just want you to imagine for a moment what it's like to be a Muslim mother, for example, and go travelling with your family, and hear on the news, as you're travelling, about a terrorist attack that has happened in some part of the world. I've heard comments from Muslims in my community, who have spoken to me repeatedly about this. Imagine how it feels. You're always wondering: "I hope it's not one of our own."

That kind of stigma is something that people walk around with in our communities, and it's not fair. The more that we can do to rid our societies of institutionalized racism, the better.

I saw on Facebook recently a young girl, who wears a hijab, who said she's in a graduating class. She said to one of her friends on Facebook, "I think I'm the only one who doesn't have a job." That's not right. It's still happening in our communities and we need to fix it.

This is very important legislation. We need to do everything possible in our communities to make sure that this legislation passes and that we do the work on the ground to rid our societies of systemic racism.

I'm very proud of the work that our community is doing. I'm very proud of the work that the minister has done on this file. I look forward to hearing more debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Barrie.

Ms. Ann Hoggarth: I quite often talk about being a teacher and being in a classroom. My latest class was junior kindergarten and senior kindergarten. I can tell you that those children do not know what racism is. They treat everyone the same.

I think one of the best examples of that was the two little boys who, I think, were from the United States. They decided they'd trick their teacher, so they decided to get their hair cut the same. The thing about that is, one of them was black and the other one was white. They see no difference in their classmates. No matter what we think of differences, they don't see that.

Somewhere, later on, they become racialized. I think it's usually in the home or watching TV, or somewhere like that. We have to make sure, when we're working on this Anti-Racism Directorate, that we start very early.

I know the teachers often incorporate great stories for children, so that they understand that everyone is different and it's not bad to be different.

Our stakeholders and our constituents asked for anti-racism legislation, and the measures outlined in the proposed Anti-Racism Act reflect what the Anti-Racism Directorate heard in public hearings and from the community organizations.

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There was a lot of consultation that went on for this bill. Last year, our government created the Anti-Racism Directorate to bring an anti-racism perspective to government policy, programs and services. Since its establishment, the Anti-Racism Directorate held 10 open meetings between July and December 2016, where we heard firsthand the painful realities of racism experienced by people across Ontario. More than 2,500 people attended the ARD public meetings between July and December 2016 in Toronto, Hamilton, Mississauga, Scarborough, Sudbury, Kitchener, London, Thunder Bay, Windsor and Ottawa. An additional 2,000 people participated in the public meetings via live streaming online.

People shared stories that spoke to the devastating impact of systemic racism—and I agree with my colleague from Nepean–Carleton about that commercial where the Muslim couple is pulling into their driveway and the mother starts to cry when she sees the racial graffiti on their garage door. That kind of thing should never happen here in Canada.

The people at the consultations talked about the barriers that they face in schools, at work and within the child welfare and justice systems. They talked about the need to establish the Anti-Racism Directorate in law. This legislation was born out of those meetings. We heard that anti-racism legislation was the number one priority for many of the community partners. The proposed legislation was influenced by the Colour of Poverty—Colour of Change's draft anti-racism bill. The measures set out in the proposed legislation align well with those set out in the COP—COC bill, and facilitate the government's ongoing commitment to supporting anti-racism across a range of public sector organizations.

Public input from community meetings, along with recommendations and reports from over the years are at the heart of our provincial strategies to fight systemic racism. Battling systemic racism is no small task, as we all know, but by working together, we can build an Ontario where everyone is able to succeed and prosper and

equally participate in and contribute to society. Let's hope that we all become like those two little fellas that got the haircut—not that I want my hair cut.

The proposed Anti-Racism Act is a significant step towards advancing the goal of racial equality in Ontario. And why it's important: The legislation would embed the Anti-Racism Directorate into law. Embedding the Anti-Racism Directorate into law would ensure the future of the province's anti-racism work beyond political cycles. This is extremely important to the people of Ontario.

Ontarians saw the Anti-Racism Directorate dismantled, as the member from Hamilton Mountain said, by the former Progressive Conservative government, and they stated very clearly in public consultations that this cannot be allowed to happen again. This is why we are here today proposing to embed the Anti-Racism Directorate right into law. We need to rebuild community trust and confidence. The government is committed to long-term solutions to address the disparities and unequal outcomes related to systemic racism. We have started our work through A Better Way Forward, the province's three-year strategic plan to address anti-racism, and through the proposed Anti-Racism Act. We want to do this right. That means being transparent and accountable to the public and especially the communities most affected by systemic barriers.

I have to say that over my many years of teaching—I think I'm number one on the seniority list for all of Simcoe county teachers; yes, I've been around a while. I'd have to say that when I first started to teach in Barrie—actually, I started in Milton—there were no people of colour in any of the classes that I taught. The last classes that I taught at Terry Fox all had about 25% of people of colour in them. Barrie has changed. All of our communities are changing. That is good. We need to make sure that the changes and progress we make are here to stay.

The plan leverages the work of other ministries and takes a whole-government approach to working towards racial equity. The ARD has partnered with many of the ministries. One of the biggest criticisms I hear is that many of the ministries have been siloed and that there is no crossover. I think this bill will do a lot so that all the ministries can work together to approach this bill and make it an excellent legislative bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The President of the Treasury Board.

Hon. Liz Sandals: Thank you very much, Speaker. I'm very pleased to be able to rise and speak in support of Bill 114, which is An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures.

This bill does a number of things to combat racism. But, in my opinion, one of the really important things that it does is that it actually embeds the Anti-Racism Directorate right in the law. The legislation talks about the creation of the Anti-Racism—or at least the existence, because it's already been created. It talks about the existence of the Anti-Racism Directorate, talks about the work that it will do.

It actually embeds the directorate in law. The reason that's important is because it actually protects the directorate from the political cycles that we inevitably go through in this House. There actually was an Anti-Racism Secretariat previously, in the early 1990s, but then the Progressive Conservative government dismantled it. It ceased to exist.

One of the things that we heard when we did consultations was that the public said, "You've set the Anti-Racism Directorate up again, but now we want you to make sure that it isn't going to disappear." The way we make sure that it isn't going to disappear is by embedding the directorate right in the law. So I think that's one of the things that I'm very, very proud of.

One of the other areas that I'm very interested in, and the Minister for Children and Youth Services and I have talked about this a lot, is the ability to collect race-based data. I know that that often gives people pause, but I know from my experience as education minister that when we set up the Indigenous Education Strategy, one of the things we said was we actually need to be able to identify our First Nation, Métis and Inuit students, because it's well known that there's a gap in performance, for a whole variety of historic reasons, between our indigenous students and other students. But if we're going to have strategies to try to narrow that gap, we can only tell if the strategies are effective if we actually have the race-based data that allows us to monitor the performance of different groups. I think people often look at the collection of race-based data in a negative way, as though we're trying to negatively label certain groups. But in fact, what we're really trying to do when we collect that race-based data is have the ability (a) to identify issues, and then (b) to monitor whether or not we're successfully correcting those issues.

One of the things that this legislation does is it provides a standardized approach to collecting race-related data. We just simply do not have good information in Ontario right now about those disproportionalities in success. If we're going to find out if the anti-racism strategy is a success, we need to be able to measure it, just as with any other program.

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So this bill does set out the ability to create race-based data in a way that will be consistent. For example, we know that black children make up 41% of the children in care. How do we address that? Obviously, there is an anomaly going on here. They're overrepresented in the population that is part of the child welfare system. If we're going to address it, we need to have standards. The minister has been working very carefully with the privacy commissioner—because we certainly don't want to offend anyone—around the standards, so that we will be able to do that.

Certainly, one of the things that we have to make sure that we're doing is protecting privacy. We do not want data about any individual to be able to be identified. That means that, laid out in the legislation, we have the rules around how we would de-identify, how we would

disaggregate the data to make sure—or aggregate the race-based data to make sure no particular individuals are being identified.

But what this really allows us to do is, as we look at work that's happening in the ministries of justice, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services itself, as we work through all of these issues, we will now have consistent standards that have been approved by the privacy commissioner, and that we know that we can move ahead comfortably with the collection of the data that will be so critical in making sure that we can address issues of racism—and everybody is gazing skyward, because even here in the Legislature, we can hear that a tremendous thunderstorm has just opened up outside. With that, I will conclude.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It was my pleasure to listen to the debate today by the member from Kingston and the Islands, the member from Barrie and, of course, the Treasury Board president.

When the member from Barrie spoke, she talked about children. That's very important to me. I continue to talk about my own daughter all of the time, and the diversity that she is surrounded with.

There's a couple of things that I just want to put on the record, because I think it speaks to the place where we want to actually end up. The member talked about the two little boys who thought they were identical when they got the same haircut, but they happened to be two different colours.

Something I saw earlier in the week, which was quite something, was a little girl from the States and she wanted to get a new doll. Her parents told her, after she was potty-trained, that she'd get a new doll. She went to Target and picked up the doll, and the doll was a doctor. When they were going through the checkout, the older woman who worked at Target basically suggested that maybe she should put the doll back, and the little girl goes, "No, I'm not putting the doll back. She looks exactly like me." And the cashier effectively said, "No, no, are you sure you don't want a white doll?" And the little girl said, "Well, no. I want the doll that looks just like me. I want to be a doctor, and she's a doctor"—so that's a two-year-old kid.

Then finally, my daughter recently had her birthday. She's into this American Girl doll thing. It's very expensive. We go in and we see this doll. She picks this doll that looks like her very good friend, and very good hockey player, Bethany. I thought that was great. She picked up the doll that was brown, because it looked just like her friend Bethany, and she thought that was fantastic.

Listen, I think we can learn a lot from our children, particularly in this debate. I think it's a good conversation that we're having, and it's one that we must continue to have in this assembly. The more that we talk about it, the more that we talk about acceptance and inclusion, the more that, I think, the public will as well. Times are changing.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

M^{me} France Gélinas: It was really interesting to listen to the three members who shared their time on this bill.

I also want to thank the minister who came over and talked to me after I had brought forward the fact that part of the bill was causing me grave concern: the exclusion of health information custodians from collecting data. As you know, Speaker, community health centres have been collecting socio-demographic data as well as other race-based data for decades now. They have used this data to work on anti-racism policies. The minister was good enough to explain to me that we have a hurdle to overcome with PHIPA, the Personal Health Information Protection Act. Hopefully we will be able to get this done before the bill receives third and final reading. I think that the end goal for both sides is that we collect data that is relevant to help us achieve our goals of anti-racism.

When I think of a community health centre like TAIBU that exists to serve the black community, or when I think about Hamilton Urban Core—the same thing: a community health centre that targets anti-racism action and programs—they have a lot to offer. The Toronto Central LHIN has mandated hospitals to collect that data for quite some time. As the minister said, the more information we have, the more chances we have to have good policies that we can measure and that we can take steps forward on that we can all be proud of.

PHIPA is never little, but if we put our brains together, I'm sure we'll find something positive out of this.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I want to thank all of members who are speaking on this proposed legislation. I want to thank them because, like I said earlier, this is not a conversation we hear often in the Legislature: looking for ways to fight something like systemic racism. I think that this type of legislation will help us build an Ontario that cannot afford to stand still. There's a cost to standing still. If we work together, we can build an Ontario that can continue to prosper based on removing barriers and allowing people to reach their full potential.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative is part of, I think, a bigger series of initiatives under the Wynne government. I've been proud to be a minister with the Premier and with my colleagues, and be part of a government that is looking for ways to better position people for success here in the province of Ontario.

Recently, we announced a new black youth action plan, an investment of \$47 million here in Ontario.

I was with Minister Hoskins recently. We talked about an investments in sickle cell, which predominantly affects people with darker skin.

We had the Attorney General, in his previous role, work on the carding legislation.

We made a declaration as a government to support the 10-year declaration for people of African descent that came out of the United Nations. We were the only jurisdiction that replied to that call from the United Nations to make that actual commitment.

Justice Tulloch has been working on strengthening the justice system.

We've strengthened our relationship with indigenous communities. In fact, a leader from an indigenous community recently told me that this is a really good relationship he has with the Premier and this government.

I'm proud to be part of a government that is making positive changes to help build this province up.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm honoured to rise here today to be part of the discussion on Bill 114.

When I hear some of the issues here, it really is quite shocking. I had the opportunity to watch the film Hidden Figures this year, and I was quite shocked when I saw what was going on—not so much the timing of the 1960s, but the fact that it took place at NASA, which you would think would have been a very progressive institution at the time, being involved with putting a man on the moon.

The waste of talent and the racism there was something that maybe is foreign to us, at least where I'm from. It just was hard to believe that that was still going on, at least in a place of that nature. You had people that had such talent and such skills, and they were forced to endure really demeaning issues, things like using a fountain. Anyway, it just shows the need to talk about these issues and letting people know that it's unacceptable. We've come a long way, but there are still many, many miles to go—you can see if anything even close to that is going on.

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We in the PC caucus certainly support this bill and what it's doing. We're looking forward to seeing that it puts in place some meaningful changes. We don't need a bill that just talks about making changes or talks about making a difference; we need some meaningful results out of this legislation.

Really, as a people, we're much stronger when we work together, and that means everybody. That means allowing people the ability to go as far as they can, because society in general is much better when people can do as well as they can.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. I return to the President of the Treasury Board to reply.

Hon. Liz Sandals: We had a very ugly incident in Guelph a couple of years ago, where there was very Islamophobic graffiti on one of the mosques. The response of the members and the leadership of the mosque was absolutely amazing and exemplary. Obviously, they were angry, but their take-away was, "People don't understand who we are." They reached out to the community. They had a number of events where they invited community members to come in and to learn about the Muslim community, to learn about their story and their beliefs.

And they still continue. As part of that, they created a program called community bridges, where they work in

partnership with representatives of other faiths, of other community groups. They actually arrange a very big event each year that fills the biggest banquet hall in Guelph, where they have a community bridges banquet, where they recognize all of the partners in the community bridges initiative and say thank you to people who are coming together.

If you look at the stats, I think you would find that Guelph actually has a higher proportion than many communities of the number of hate crimes that people have been charged with in the police stats. I think, in part, that that is actually a tribute to the Guelph Police Service, that when something racist happens, they are actually willing to charge the perpetrators, not just with vandalism or assault or whatever it would be, but with a hate crime. I think we've got some important examples for all of us there.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate?

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I'm pleased to rise and debate today on this important bill, Bill 114, the proposed Anti-Racism Act, 2017. I want to thank everyone for their hard work in putting this bill together and getting it to the point where we are today. Systemic racism is unfortunately persistent here in Ontario. We must constantly strive towards a more equal, fair society for all.

I'm no stranger to discrimination, and I would like to share my personal story. I was born and raised in South Korea before I came to this great country, Canada, in 1967. There was barely any mention of racial discrimination among Koreans in Korea, mainly because it was such a homogeneous society. When I landed in Vancouver, British Columbia, as a landed immigrant, I gradually began to experience different forms of racial discrimination in different social situations. For example, when I was taking the bus to work and sitting down in one of the chairs, I realized that no one came and sat beside me, even though there was enough space and the bus was filled. Although I did not mind having so much space to myself on public transit, I came to realize that many people did not want to sit next to me because I'm an immigrant or perhaps because I look different.

I'd like to share another example as a new immigrant. I was very busy looking for a room to rent. When I saw an advertisement in the local newspaper for a room to rent, I would go out to that place and knock on the door. They opened the door and I inquired about the room for rent, and the lady who responded to my door knocking said, "Oh, I'm sorry. The room was just taken." I just believed the lady and continued searching for a different room to rent. After this occurred a few more times, I slowly came to realize and understand the meaning of racial discrimination in my new country of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, now I'd like to share my very common and painful experience that most new Canadians experience when they arrive in Canada.

Each time I had a job interview as a new immigrant, the first question that I would be asked was if I had any

Canadian experience. Of course, my answer was always no as I was never able to get a job in Canada.

Finally, I got a job. This job gave me great joy and it gave me a sense of relief, as well as a great surge of confidence. Now I knew for sure I would not die from starvation.

That was around mid-April 1967 in Vancouver. I had less than \$50 with me. The first job was as a dishwasher in a big restaurant. I thought that washing dishes would be an easy job; however, it was actually very difficult and tiring. My fingers were bleeding after every shift work from scrubbing so hard on the metal pans.

After two weeks of hard work as a dishwasher, I got my first cheque. I went to the bank with my head held very high to deposit my \$40. Truly, I was very happy, and I felt like I was a millionaire.

I told the bank teller that I was there to open up an account and deposit my money. The bank teller asked me my profession. As a new immigrant, although I knew English, I did not quite understand the word "profession" or what she meant. So I asked the bank teller, "Could you tell me the meaning of 'profession'?" Maybe a bit of sarcasm; I don't know. She told me it meant a job—she didn't say "you idiot," but the non-verbal behaviour was there; pardon my language, Mr. Speaker—and looked down at me for asking. I told her that my profession was a dishwasher. She laughed at me, yet I still felt very proud of my new job and source of income.

However, I felt that having moved to Canada and working as a dishwasher would not be my end goal. Instead, I knew that to become more successful, I would have to become a rich man or get a better education. I decided to go with achieving higher education and become a professional worker. I approached the University of British Columbia and applied for admission to their MBA program. I was accepted to the University of British Columbia, but to afford the tuition, I first had to work more in order to pay for it.

I got a job in northern British Columbia near the border of Yukon Territory. There, I worked as a labourer in an asbestos mine during the day, a waiter at a bar in the evening and as a janitor during the night.

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When I was working in that northern community, I saw the real discrimination against the indigenous people. Because of the systemic racism, the people there did not see the benefits of getting an education and were unfortunately caught in a cycle of discrimination which they did not know how to get out of. This persistent discrimination unfortunately made them feel that their Canadian dream was an unrealistic goal for them. As Nelson Mandela once said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." It saddened me to witness how people become victims of systemic discrimination and that they may not even realize they are victims of the system, or perhaps they do not know how to get out of the cycle.

In September 1967, thank God, I was admitted to an MBA program at the University of British Columbia.

However, I was too tired and drained to study and I had to discontinue my MBA program in Vancouver. However, in December of that same year, I moved to Toronto, the city I now call my second home. Toronto was quite a different city compared to Vancouver in terms of racial discrimination.

However, finding a job for a new immigrant like me was not different between Toronto and Vancouver. Each time I had a job interview in Toronto, the first question I was asked was, "Do you have Canadian experience? What kind of Canadian experience do you have?" This time my answer to that question during the interview was, "Yes, I have experience in Canada," and my experience was as a dishwasher. So my first job in Toronto in the year 1968 was as a janitor at the Toronto General Hospital.

My determination in pursuing my education motivated me to study further, at the University of Toronto. I ended up getting three degrees from U of T. I was hired by the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto as a professional social worker after I was awarded an MSW degree from U of T. I felt so thankful for that position and to the Catholic Children's Aid Society.

By the way, I'd like to add that after being a dishwasher, janitor, all that, I felt so thankful that I got the job. I went to Catholic Children's Aid as a social worker. I was the first social worker to arrive in that building, and I was the last worker who left the building in the evening. I'm sure the management appreciated my hard, good work. But one day my next-door neighbour approached me: "Hey, Raymond." "Yes?" "I'd like to chat with you." "Sure." "It's great you work so hard." "Oh, thank you. You appreciate my good work." "Yes. But you know what? You make all of us look so bad. Why do you work so hard?"

I'm sorry, but I continued to work hard. I loved helping people, and because of my hard work and the generosity from management, I got a free scholarship at the U of T and finished my MSW and continued to study. Helping people is not easy, so I felt I needed more skill, more knowledge. And that's how I ended up getting so many degrees.

As I was working as a social worker at the children's aid society, time and again I witnessed that more children from indigenous, immigrant and low socio-economic families were admitted compared to children of higher social and economic classes of families. Again, I was saddened to see how children and families from racialized, marginalized communities had no choice or less of a choice because they were trapped in the cycle of systemic discrimination.

It was too much pressure for me to observe so many children from less fortunate families coming into the care of children's aid. I finally left the CCAS in the early 1970s and got a new job as a school social worker with the Toronto school board. I also saw systemic racial discrimination imposed on the same students from a similar background—perhaps unintentionally, but nevertheless, it was there.

In 1991, I got elected as a Metro Toronto city councillor, the first Canadian politician of Korean background. Working as a city councillor has allowed me to interact with a vastly diverse group of people from all over the world. This experience made me realize that individuals from marginalized communities need our help and our leadership so that they can escape the cycle of marginalization and discrimination.

I have always stood up for the marginalized people of my community. After the horrible attacks on September 11 in the United States, I met with the Muslim people in my then ward and even got the police of 42 division involved in ensuring the safety of all Muslims and that their mosques would not be vandalized. I cannot thank 42 division enough for their dedicated work helping Muslim communities feel safe during that turbulent time.

I understand that I'm not the only one who has faced discrimination, that many of us are still currently facing discrimination. I hope my story does not dispirit others, but instead empowers others to see that the system of racism can be broken. However, many of us have not gotten the opportunities that I have had and are still caught in the cycle of being discriminated against.

Bill 114 is a step in the right direction towards combatting systemic racism. With Canada's population becoming more diverse by the year, the need for an end to any form of racism needed to happen yesterday. However, we are not at this stage. Therefore, we must do our best as legislators to combat racism today so that the people of tomorrow can enjoy Ontario to the fullest, so that Ontario can become a role model for other provinces and so that Canada can be a role model for the world.

We, as members of provincial Parliament, are seen as leaders in our respective communities. We must ensure that we bring the right message of acceptance and that we will stand up against discrimination and systemic racism.

The need to end racism is persistent, especially when we look at our changing demographics. According to Statistics Canada, nearly one in two Canadians could be an immigrant or the child of an immigrant by 2036. If the current levels of immigration continue in the coming years, the proportion of immigrants in Canada's population could reach between 24.5% and 30% in 2036. Combining immigrants and second-generation individuals, the percentage of Canada's population in 2011 was 38.2%, which could be between 44.2% and almost 50% by 2036.

The places immigrants are coming from are increasingly more diverse than 50 years ago. Canada has opened its doors to more people from vastly different cultures and societies, who practise different religions, faiths and beliefs. Moving forward, the diversity of Canada will only increase as time passes by.

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In my riding of Scarborough-Rouge River, you can hear languages from all corners of the world. You can see people practising different religions and faiths from all over the world. The diversity of my riding is one of the highest here in Ontario. I strongly believe that my riding

of Scarborough–Rouge River is so great because of its diversity.

I do not want to see the people from my riding or, as a matter of fact, any place here in Ontario or even Canada being discriminated against because of the way that someone is. I, like many others, came to Canada because we had a dream of settling here in this great country, getting a job, starting a family, adding back to our Canadian communities and calling Canada our home.

Immigration and diversity are Canada's and Ontario's strengths and add to their cultures, communities and economies.

Bill 114 is a step in the right direction; however, we must ensure that the delicate personal information the bill asks for from the people of Ontario is used in a safe, secure and proper way. We must ensure that the personal information that this bill asks for is not abused and is strictly used for ending systemic racism and other forms of racism.

Bill 114 covers many good points, such as an intermittent review of the progress enforced by the bill. We, the legislators, know that bills and laws alone cannot change social behaviours and change our society. We need more efficient education for public servants, as well as the general public. We need to establish equal and fair employment practices that reflect and respect the characteristics of the diverse population and communities here in Ontario.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on Bill 114. And I want to thank everyone, especially the minister, for their hard work on this very important step.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: I'd like to thank the member from Scarborough–Rouge River for sharing his personal story. I think it's incredibly powerful when people stand in their place and share their lived experience of employment, of education and of living in the province of Ontario.

It's important also for us to remember that this piece of legislation, Bill 114, the Anti-Racism Act, is really the legislative piece, the legislative framework that will hold the Liberal government accountable for some of the promises that they've made around dealing with racism in the province of Ontario.

We are of the opinion that it is long overdue. People will remember that not only have we lent our support to the creation of the Anti-Racism Directorate, but in fact, this came after we had many calls from our caucus over the years to create an Anti-Racism Secretariat, which would have been our preferred model, I don't mind telling you, Mr. Speaker. It was actually modelled after an initiative begun in 1991, which unfortunately, in that time period, was dismantled by the PC Party shortly after that.

The member really does raise the issue of some of the challenges that racism creates for marginalized communities in Ontario. Those barriers are real—you've heard

that first-hand—but the resilience that he shared really is a strength.

I look forward to debating this piece of legislation for the rest of the afternoon. It was a long time coming, and we have to be very clear in our commitment to addressing racism through the directorate, because that's the model now, in a systemic way.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Hon. Michael Coteau: I want to thank the member from Scarborough–Rouge River for his comments. I've had the opportunity to work with him in the past. When he was a city councillor, I worked as a youth counsellor out in Scarborough. I know that his community is very diverse. I know his history and his storyline, and it was nice of him to share those stories with us here in the Legislature today.

One of the issues that the member opposite brought forward was the work around child welfare reform. He talked about the overrepresentation of black youth in the system. I just want the member to know that in our three-year strategy, which is available online, on page 21 there's a section on the farthest right that talks about One Vision, One Voice. It's a project that we've committed to as a government, and it was a project that came about by bringing the black community together—we provided some funding—to look for ways to build a framework to better address some of the issues around overrepresentation and equity within child welfare reform. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in the piece of legislation that we put forward to reform child welfare, it actually acknowledges "systemic racism," which I think is the first piece of legislation in the history of this province, if not this country, that actually uses that terminology in the actual legislation.

In regard to the member from Kitchener–Waterloo, she made reference to the fact that this is long overdue. I believe that a lot of the work that we're tackling today as a government is long overdue. I agree with that. But, you know, Mr. Speaker, I've been in this Legislature for six years, and I cannot remember anyone from the opposite side asking about an issue around the black youth and overrepresentation in CAS or about the youth violence that's taking place in the streets of Toronto and across this province. So I think it's long overdue, not only for this government but for the opposition to start focusing on issues that matter.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Lisa MacLeod: It's my pleasure to rise and debate today on this important legislation. May I first say to my colleague Mr. Cho from Scarborough–Rouge River how incredibly proud I am of him, not just for a remarkable speech but for a life very well lived, and one that has been a big inspiration to all of us as his colleagues in the Ontario official opposition. When he said that he had gone for job interviews and people asked him if he had any Canadian experience, of course he had to continue to say no. I would love it for those people to see you here on the floor of this assembly giving the speech you just gave, because you have proven them wrong.

I know you have had a long and distinguished career at the city of Toronto, but I think that today in this debate you have proven yourself yet again as somebody of remarkable courage, somebody who has a desire for public service, somebody who understands the challenges that people face in the province of Ontario.

I'm so incredibly proud of you, and I thank you very much for your debate today. I understand. You and I are the only two members of our caucus who represent wholly urban ridings that are contained within the two largest cities in Ontario, without any rural communities. When I was going door to door for him—it was warm weather—last September, we got a sense of that, the diversity that exists in Ottawa and in Toronto and in this assembly.

So I want to congratulate him yet again—what a wonderful speech.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Questions and comments?

Mr. John Vanthof: It's always an honour to be able to stand in this House, and today it's an honour to speak following the member from Scarborough—Rouge River. I would also like to echo the comments of some of my colleagues that some of the most powerful presentations in this House are when people talk about the lives they've lived and how that relates to the issue at hand. That was one of the most powerful ones that I've heard, about how tough it has been, how tough it continues to be, how we can make changes and how, despite everything, people succeed. You, the member from Scarborough—Rouge River, identify personally with some of those issues. That is the strength of this House. I would congratulate you for that.

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I hope that, as we're having this debate—and it's a good debate; that's something that I can appreciate about this House. Sometimes we descend into outright partisanship, and this isn't the debate where we should do that.

When we're talking about an anti-racism bill or anti-racism secretariat, we also have to keep in mind other issues, like part-time, precarious work, because many, many of these people, who are discriminated against, end up in situations like that. We have to make sure that we, as our caucus continues to do, push forward on all these issues. Anti-racism is something we all have to work together for; it's going to be something we're forever going to have to combat.

My final point is that I too door-knocked in Scarborough—Rouge River—not for Mr. Cho—but I come from a very rural riding. It was an incredible education for me. That's also a great strength of this, that we get to go across the province and learn from each other. It's an honour for me to have been able to do that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): The member from Scarborough—Rouge River has two minutes.

Mr. Raymond Sung Joon Cho: I would like to thank all of the MPPs who just spoke—especially from Kitchener—Waterloo. I agree with the MPP, racism is

often created in the marginalized community, not that they are manufacturing it because of racial discrimination. Again, I agree with her that the resilience of victimized people, if they keep fighting, will change the world for the better.

The minister of anti-racism: I used to work with Minister Mike Coteau a long time ago. We have been good friends. I was a councillor, he was a school trustee. Today, he's so high sometimes I have to look up, like that. I'm so glad. You're right, Minister for Children and Youth and minister for anti-racism: We have to fight. Anti-racism is one of the most important social issues. If we don't do that, we all become losers, not just the victims.

My esteemed colleague from Nepean—Carleton made an excellent speech. I paid attention when the MPP was speaking: I understand why she's such an open-minded person and MPP. I do appreciate and always get the support from all of my caucus members, especially the member from Nepean.

Lastly, I totally agree with the response from the third party. We all have to work hard together. I believe that every member, regardless of their party association or identity, will work hard to make Ontario a better place.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paul Miller): Further debate?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to stand in my place to debate and discuss government Bill 114, the Anti-Racism Act. In many respects, I have waited a long time to be a part of this debate, beginning as a school board trustee back in 2003, and prior to that as a school community adviser and settlement worker with the former Toronto Board of Education, where, quite honestly, helping navigate and facilitate the multicultural and diverse community into the school system was a valued role, because those supports were needed to address many of the obstacles.

I am going to be talking about Kitchener—Waterloo and Waterloo region in general a little bit, just to give it some provincial context. I do want to say that I think in order to address systemic barriers and issues that we face on the racism file—because it is actually more prevalent today than it has ever been—I will say that we have to be honest about who we are. We have to look at our communities with our eyes wide open and be reflective about what's happening in our community. And sometimes we have this sort of insulated opinion of our communities because we're so proud to come from them. Our worlds are very different, and I will acknowledge that I am speaking from a position of privilege as a white woman who lives and works in Waterloo region.

With that in mind, in 2009, Waterloo region made national headlines as the hate crime capital of Canada. This is something we don't talk a lot about because we've done a lot of work since that point in time. The Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council took notice of these numbers and organized a forum in 2014 called Breaking the Silence on Hidden Violence. Sometimes we don't see racism as an act of violence, but I think there

has to be a cultural shift, if you will, in that regard. The forum established a working group which seeks to create awareness of hate crimes in my community. While the working group is currently focused on LGBTQ-based hate crimes, their efforts highlight the proliferation of hate crime in Waterloo region.

Since 2014, the number of reported hate crimes in Waterloo region has fallen, and a lot of work has gone into addressing the issue of hate crimes. However, we have to remember that one third of hate crimes go unreported, and that's important.

Waterloo region was host to one of nine community meetings led by the Anti-Racism Directorate in the fall. I don't believe we were on the original list, but I want to thank the minister, because I did write a letter to him and made the point of saying, "While Waterloo region is one of the most innovative and collaborative communities in Ontario, incidents of racism continue to occur at a rate higher than other communities in Ontario and we can do better." I think the conversations that we had at that meeting were significant. And to the point that we have to be honest about what's happening, about the problems that exist in order to solve those problems, that was a good first step.

Some of you may have heard, though, because there have been incidents—and from a disturbing perspective, there seems to be an acceleration. One has to only look to south of the border to see the tension, the divisiveness and the permissiveness around the language that political leaders are using in the United States, which really has infiltrated, I think, even emboldened, some inherent, racist feelings that people have.

In 2015, a Hindu temple in Kitchener was vandalized. Five rocks were thrown through the windows of the temple. This happened two days after the terrorist attack in Paris. That's my point: There is this very prolific but hidden sense of anger that people have when there are violent incidents that happen in other places, which transfers to our own communities. This happened, as I said, two days after the attack in Paris. Around the same time, Peterborough's only mosque was deliberately burned down. These are points of shame for us.

Before this act of vandalism, temple board member Vijay Solanki said that racial slurs had been painted on the temple wall in the past. After the vandalism, a group of GTA Muslims started an online campaign to raise money for the repairs at the Hindu temple, and in their fundraising campaign they said, "As Muslims we are quickly realizing that these hate crimes are not just affecting our community; it is not just our mosque being burned, or our people being attacked." It takes a lot of courage to speak up in this way.

We have an ongoing issue right now in Waterloo region. Part of the Muslim Association of Canada is looking to open up a Muslim prayer centre. You have to remember that Waterloo region was one of the number one draws for new immigrants and refugees—the fourth-largest draw for refugees and immigrants in Canada. Many people don't know that. Our community is chang-

ing drastically. We look different; we sound different; we pray differently. Therefore, those religious institutions need to be reflective of the people who are coming into the region.

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However, in Waterloo region, there is an issue. I've said that there is a growing need for a prayer centre on the west side of Waterloo, which is home to more than 150 Muslim families. There was unreasonable pushback from the community; this project has received the most pushback of any project the association has undertaken, ever, in Waterloo region. Common sense should prevail. They would say the community is changing. We have had mosques; we have had gurdwaras; we do have temples. We should be adaptive to the changing religious demographics.

Yet now, in 2017, we've seen some of the most vitriolic pushback to a small prayer centre on Erbsville Road, near Laurelwood Drive, in Waterloo. I'm going to quote from Luisa D'Amato's piece from just March 29, so very recently. Here are some of the responses, because we have to be clear about what people are saying about Muslims in our community. They are saying, "You should be on a farm somewhere where no one can see you." "This is going to bring more Muslim families to the neighbourhood, and that's going to lower my house values." "I hope this city stops the Muslim centre, and all other Muslim places [are] torn down."

There are others that I cannot speak of. I cannot repeat them because they are violent. They make me ashamed. The organizer of the prayer centre project, who also lives in the neighbourhood, said she couldn't believe some of the comments that were made during the meeting earlier this month.

The meeting was organized by the Muslim Association to offer more information to neighbours about the project, which still requires a zone change from city council. The association wasn't required to host a meeting, but it did anyway, in order to be helpful.

There were comments made by the association, the architect and the city of Waterloo planning official. After that, there was an opportunity for individual residents to approach the experts one on one and ask questions. More than 100 people attended, and there was an incident at this meeting where the sign-in sheets were ripped up. People responded with anger and with opinions which can only be based on fear, really—fear and racism. It has to be said that when you are saying things like this, these statements that I've just shared with you, those are racist statements. They must be called out for being racist.

After the meeting was over, the organizer said that she wanted to be sick; she felt sick to her stomach. She couldn't believe that these were the kinds of reactions. The organizer said that the prayer centre was proposed because it would help observant Muslims living nearby. They are required to pray five times a day, preferably in a group setting. The proposed centre would allow people to bike or walk over instead of driving a longer distance, and it would foster a sense of belonging for Muslims in the community.

There doesn't appear to be any valid reason for city of Waterloo council to deny the zone change. One of the councillors mentioned, "If our concern is about traffic," which sometimes is a valid reason to deny a zone change, "that horse may have already left the barn." We are growing so much, the traffic planning is really catching up to that kind of growth.

Sadly, there was a comment made, and the columnist agrees. She says, "I think Lawendy is right when she says there would have been no opposition if a Christian church had made the request." I think that's very powerful.

You know, we witness anti-Muslim bigotry all over the world. Let's not think it can't happen here. When one community doesn't stand with the other communities, we are inherently allowing it. We're permitting it; it's permissive. And for those of you who don't know how I stand on that issue, you now do. This small prayer centre: The zoning should pass. The centre should go up and people should welcome—we are all immigrants in this country except for the first peoples, and sometimes it seems that we've forgotten that, quite clearly.

There are some really positive things happening, though. There is a response to some of the racist actions and words and feelings that people feel in the region. As a result, a positive anti-racism initiative has arisen from that. I always say that sometimes people discover that they are activists when they're faced with a very conflicting perspective.

Wilfrid Laurier University has an initiative to fight campus racism. This is something that I hope the minister pays attention to, because I did want to bring it to his attention. The Wilfrid Laurier University diversity and equity office recently published a report in March 2017—two weeks ago—calling for a new approach to promoting diversity and equity. That report concluded that simply promoting diversity and equity on campus is not enough. Essentially, it doesn't suffice. It doesn't shift a culture of an organization to promote diversity, to use positive diversity language.

Laurier's director of diversity and equity—her name is Laura Mae Lindo; she's an amazing woman—said that campuses need programs, research and training that explicitly target racism, even if this is scarier and more difficult than promoting diversity or multiculturalism.

The report calls for anti-racism training for senior administrators and faculty, as well as an online portal for sharing anti-racism resources.

The report follows a summit in 2016, hosted by Laurier, which examined race and racism at Canadian university campuses. This was a national summit. A key take-away from the summit was summed up by Renu Mandhane, chief of the Ontario Human Rights Commission. She said, "It is not enough to simply react to an incident of racism after it happens." And let's be honest: That's essentially what we do. We do. We react to racism, and sometimes we don't react to it in a very productive way or a very effective way.

Laurier hopes to take the lead in addressing issues of systemic racism on Canadian university campuses. I'm

so proud of the work that they are doing. They are also tackling sexism on our campuses. These are very real issues that affect the culture of our universities, the academic success of the students and the working conditions, quite honestly.

Laurier is hoping to establish a sector-wide approach to systemic racism. The report stresses the importance of collecting and analyzing data to measure change. For Laurier, not having accurate data is a huge challenge for doing anti-racism work on campus.

I would say, with respect, that this will be the same issue for the minister. Good data informs good policy, but you have to be honest about the data that you're collecting. You have to be transparent with the data. The data has to be processed in a way which actually makes it actionable.

That is what Wilfrid Laurier University is doing, under the leadership of Laura Mae Lindo, who is Laurier's director of diversity and equity. I commend them for doing that.

The connecting piece with Bill 114 is that it enables the government to mandate race data collection and an anti-racism impact assessment framework in order to properly apply anti-racism perspectives to public sector policies and programs.

I do feel that there will come a day, and there will come a time, when the language that we're using around applying a gender lens to our budget—we may actually get to a point where we apply an anti-racist lens to our budget. When you look at the effect of where funding goes, where financial resources go in this province, that has impact on the success rates of marginalized communities, of the black community and certainly of First Nations communities.

Federally, of course, we are looking at a long-standing, systemic, almost 33% less funding for education on reserves for First Nations children. How we can ever expect children to be successful when they don't have access to the health care that they need, the social services, the mental health—and education, because when you get education right, almost everything else will come into place. Education obviously is a big part of this bill going forward.

But we have to be, as I stated—which is why I've been so very clear about what's happening in my own community, because my community is asking me very good questions about the Anti-Racism Directorate. They are asking, "How is the secretariat going to address the fact that there are violent incidents in Waterloo region? What is the mandate of the secretariat, and will that mandate be actionable for the minister?"

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We, of course, have urged the Ontario Human Rights Commissioner to task the secretariat with—sorry, the directorate—with undertaking broad consultations inside and outside government on how the government and the broader public sector can do more, because one of the things that we can do better in the province of Ontario is that our own government could be less racist. I know it's

quite a concept. But we could actually, in our hiring practices, for instance—yes, in our hiring practices, in the way that we allocate money to certain communities. What I'm saying is that the government, in all of its operational practices, should model the exact goals of what the Anti-Racism Directorate is proposing.

I think that there's a lot of work before us. I did mention in my preamble to the minister that there is some history, and he agreed that this is long overdue. I will reference the fact that we have been raising this issue of racism in the employment sector with the ongoing acceleration of marginalized communities, particularly here in Toronto, in part-time and precarious contract work. We see that very clearly as impacting negatively one community over another. Where funding is going, particularly in the province—and certainly our own critic, the member from London—Fanshawe, in her capacity raised this issue many times in this House. Collectively, we have a shared responsibility to ensure that the directorate actually is successful. In order to do that, we have to have very good data. I think that's one of the strongest points that I can make. We have to understand what is actually happening in our community. We have to understand what's happening in our schools. Why are there more black youth being expelled or suspended in our education system? That's a good question, don't you think? Why are there more black families who have their children taken into care? Why do we have more First Nations children in care in 2017 than we ever had in residential schools?

What is the impact? And when you look through the lens of how racism and racist policy, or lack thereof, as the Wilfrid Laurier study has confirmed, being proactive around diversity is only half of the equation. The education piece, which is supported by effective policy and legislation, is part of the solution as well. I think that we all have a shared responsibility to make sure that the directorate and the mandate that the minister has (1) have the resources to be successful, and (2) know that this is an accountability and transparency exercise that could potentially change the entire province and have some sense of shared prosperity for all Ontarians. That's what our collective goal should be.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: The evening that Prime Minister Trudeau was elected—speaking, I believe, from Montreal—he said, to paraphrase, that he had travelled all across Canada during that campaign and had hundreds of stories to share, but he wanted to share one in particular. He said that he had met a young Muslim lady wearing a hijab—I believe it was in Kitchener-Waterloo. She said to the then Prime Minister-elect, while handing her three-year-old daughter to him—and he's repeating this story in front of the assembled Canadian press—that, "This time, I'm going to vote for you, because I want to make sure that when this girl grows up, she will not feel any less Canadian."

Speaker, I think that those of us, which I'm pleased to say includes all members of the Legislature of Ontario,

share that sentiment, share that aspiration, that we in Canada and we in Ontario are creating something, first of all—and unfortunately seems to be largely unique across the world—that's very special and very precious—but, unfortunately, also something that can evaporate just like that.

When I look through the list of official, government-sanctioned or media-sanctioned enemies of the past 150, 200 years—whether it was First Nations, Irish, Italian, Jewish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian Communists, South American drug lords, Middle Eastern oil producers, the black community—now it seems that it's come elsewhere.

I think we need to do all that we can, as part of the mandate of the Anti-Racism Directorate as well as through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, to foster pluralism, diversity, celebration and tolerance.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Monte McNaughton: It's my pleasure to stand today to briefly discuss Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures, and to follow the member from Kitchener-Waterloo, who I think articulated a number of very key points for this discussion.

My colleague from Nepean-Carleton did an excellent job earlier this afternoon. I was in the House to listen to her remarks regarding this bill. I'm glad she mentioned the attacks on Coptic Christians that we saw over the last number of days.

Look, racism in any and all forms is completely and utterly unacceptable. I think everyone in this House, every member of provincial Parliament, is in agreement with this. I know because I have seen our Legislature, on many different occasions, arise and stand together to condemn racism and hatred.

As I said, my colleague from Nepean-Carleton did a great job summarizing some of the areas where this bill could be improved. One thing in particular that I would also like to see is recognition of anti-Semitism in Bill 114. As it stands, the three-year plan mentions certain communities and changes to our education system; however, it doesn't mention Ontario's Jewish community. So that's one point I'd like to reiterate during this two-minute opportunity to speak to Bill 114. This is one of the things that needs to be ironed out during debate and through community consultation, once this moves to that process with this legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Paul Miller: I'd like to commend the member from Kitchener-Waterloo for her submission. It was very detailed. There were some personal experiences that she had seen and read about in Kitchener-Waterloo that she shared with us, and I thank her for that.

I'm very proud as an individual to say that, in the mid-1980s, at the Steel Company of Canada, our union, 1005, was the first union in Canada to bring in a thing called item 21. Item 21 covered such comments as the way a person looks, their religion, their language and their

name. It got to a point where people were sent home and disciplined for violating item 21 in our plant. What is good about item 21 is that—that was one of the first places in Canada that brought forward a program to stop racism in many different forms. And it can take many different forms. We were quite proud of that. Not only did it work in the workforce, but when those 12,000, 14,000 employees went home—not counting the salaried people, which was about 20,000 people in our plant—that would go into the broader community, and some of the lessons learned in that plant were taken home. Unfortunately, there are still pockets of resistance and there are still people who have a tendency to lean in a racist direction.

I was very concerned about what happened in the States, south of the border, and some of the reactions that the newly elected president had to situations. The things he was going to deal with, I think, were handled very poorly, and it caused more trouble than it was worth. We've got to stamp out that kind of mentality and stamp out those attitudes.

I'm very proud of Ontario. We have over 200 cultures in this province, and we live in relative harmony. The odd time things flare up, but when they do flare up, we should squash them.

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The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. James J. Bradley: What I want to comment on first of all is the general tenor of this debate and how positive it has been. Often our debates are quite cantankerous from time to time, and with a strong streak of partisanship. I've noticed in this debate that while, yes, there have been comments that have been made one way or another about, perhaps, a deficiency in our legislation or in another party's position, generally speaking, the debate has been a very good debate, and one which I think the Legislature as a whole should be justifiably proud of.

Some personal stories—I was quite taken by the story from the member for Nepean who talked about the child who came to the checkout counter and the person at the checkout counter was trying to get her to take another doll that looked more like she did. Of course, as she mentioned, the child said, "Well, the doll does look like me because I want to be a doctor." She wasn't looking at anything about colour or race; she was talking about the person and the vocation that they would have.

We really see that in children. Children do not simply develop racist attitudes; they learn racist attitudes from adults. When adults set a good example, then that is the best lesson that children can have from those adults—and the other stories that have come forward.

Yes, we are more tolerant in Ontario and in Canada, perhaps, than in other parts of the world. But we must also always be vigilant to the fact that sometimes racism can creep into even a society such as ours. As the member for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek mentioned, you have to stomp on that immediately before it becomes a major problem.

The government, through the anti-racism impact assessment framework, by the way, has done an awful lot to be able to address this issue within the public service. I just wanted to mention that as well.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. We return to the member for Kitchener—Waterloo.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Thanks to the members from Etobicoke—Lakeshore, Lambton—Kent—Middlesex, Hamilton East—Stoney Creek and St. Catharines for their feedback on the 20 minutes that I had to talk about this piece of legislation.

To the member from Etobicoke—Lakeshore, who mentioned the Trudeau story—

Mr. Paul Miller: Etobicoke North.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Etobicoke North; my apologies.

Mr. Paul Miller: Get it right; he gets upset.

Ms. Catherine Fife: Yes, we don't want to offend him.

The story around the Muslim girl: What I would say to our Prime Minister is stop fighting First Nations people in court who are trying—the United Nations upheld the Rights of the Child and found Canada lacking in providing equitable access to health care under Jordan's Principle. It's a great story, but we're past the stories now. We need action.

The amazing Cindy Blackstock, who has taken up this cause, says that a whole generation of First Nations children will have to recover from their childhood because they do not have equitable access to health care—or education, for that matter. She also said—and it's very powerful—"Canada must free itself from the chains of racial discrimination against children." Let's be honest about what's happening in this country and in this province, and then maybe we can move forward.

I will say that this is not just a social justice issue that needs our full attention; it is an economic justice issue as well. Just a year and a half ago, a Somali man in Waterloo applied for a job, and the feedback that he received from the employer was, "We understand that your people are very aggressive, and we don't think you would fit here." This was thought to be a rational thing that you could say to an employee. That is a racist statement, clear and simple.

We need the directorate to address systemic racism in the province of Ontario. It is long overdue.

Hon. David Zimmer: Thank you, Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order?

Hon. David Zimmer: Yes, just before I begin my remarks, I'd like to rise on a point of order. It's actually relevant—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Sorry, I have to recognize you first.

I recognize the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation on a point of order.

Hon. David Zimmer: In the context of this debate, I would like to introduce the youth council from the Beausoleil First Nation. It's located on Christian Island in

Georgian Bay. We are joined by youth chief Terra Roy, youth deputy chief Lance Copegog, youth head councillor Avery Sandy, youth councillor Robin Louitt and the chief of Beausoleil First Nation, Mary McCue-King.

Applause.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Technically, it's not a point of order, but we're delighted to welcome you here to the Legislature this afternoon.

Again, I recognize the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

Hon. David Zimmer: Speaker, I'm going to address my remarks principally surrounding the issue of—

Interjection: Sharing your remarks.

Hon. David Zimmer: Oh, I'm sharing my remarks with the Minister of Transportation, who will be here shortly. If he's not, well, then I'll just keep going.

I do want to offer my remarks from the point of view of how this anti-racism strategy fits in with issues that indigenous peoples of Ontario face. It's in that regard that I'm very happy that our guests, the youth council from Beausoleil First Nation and their chief, could join us today. They're very interested in this issue, and they have some thoughtful and compelling insights into the issue that we're debating today. I say to you, thank you for the meeting that we had earlier and for joining us this afternoon.

Speaker, I was very pleased when the minister undertook this project—the minister responsible for the anti-racism secretariat. One of the first things that he did was to engage the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation on this important work. He sought the advice of my ministry, he sought the advice of me personally, and he sought the advice of many indigenous and First Nation leaders in Ontario.

I know that at the announcement of the event, which was held in Don Valley East, Regional Chief Day was there. Regional Chief Day gave a powerful speech on the very good work that this strategy is doing. He was particularly mindful that our government had fully engaged with indigenous people, particularly First Nation people, on what they thought the anti-racism strategy should look like.

To make the point at that event announcing the strategy, in addition to Chief Day speaking, there was a powerful opening prayer by an elder.

Then, in the booklet published by the Ontario government, *A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-Year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan*, on page 27, there's a very clear statement, and I want to read this into the record:

"The Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation has a mandate to strengthen relationships with indigenous communities and institutions, improve socio-economic conditions, facilitate economic sustainability, resolve land claims and promote reconciliation. Since its establishment, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation has been working to build stronger relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples to improve socio-economic outcomes and support the overall goal of reconciliation."

The overall goal of reconciliation: An important component of that goal is dealing with racist stereotypes that have developed over the last 200 years, probably particularly over the last 100 years. If one reads through the truth and reconciliation report, Mr. Justice Sinclair—or Senator Sinclair, as he now is—dealt with this issue of stereotyping. "Stereotyping" is a softer word, I suppose, or a gentler word for a harder reality, and that harder reality is racism.

From the First Nations, from the indigenous point of view, how do we deal with that? We have an obligation to fully integrate the indigenous community into all aspects of life in Ontario, whether it's in economic development, health care, education, our political life, whether it's at the provincial level or the municipal level. It's only by full integration that we can tackle these issues of racism. It's that profound work that the Ministry of Indigenous Relations, working with the anti-racism secretariat, is tackling.

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Further, in the report that I just quoted earlier, on page 46, there is an item entitled—I do want to speak about this—"Indigenous Cultural Competency Training."

"The government is implementing mandatory indigenous cultural competency and anti-racism training for every employee in the Ontario public service. The training will include topics such as terminology, diversity, aspects of colonial history such as residential schools and Indian hospitals, and contexts"—this is the important piece—"for understanding social disparities and inequities. It will also include a focus on violence against indigenous women."

With respect to that last sentence focused on violence against indigenous women, I have visited over 90 First Nations in Ontario. I've had many conversations with indigenous men and women, elders, youth and the middle-aged. One of the really nasty, venomous pieces of racism that floats in some quarters and has in the past is this idea that indigenous women who have been murdered or beaten or assaulted or raped have somehow brought it on themselves because it's inherent in the femininity of indigenous women. That is an ugly, nasty piece of racism that has to be rooted out and is being rooted out. But we still have work to do in that regard.

I also want to speak to another issue that's covered in the booklet. I'll just read it. I want to put this into the record too. I'm thinking of this now from the point of view of indigenous peoples:

"A lot went into government because they wanted to make a change. And they are afraid to speak out. They're afraid that it's going to be a career-limiting move, because what happens is that you become targeted. What happens is that you become marginalized. What happens is that you are characterized as the aggressor, as the problem."

That is an issue that is particularly prevalent in attitudes towards the indigenous community. If the indigenous community raises a concern, voices an objection, points to an area of racism, points to negative stereo-

otyping, they're often pounced on and told, "Well, you're exaggerating. You're making this up. You've got some other motive on this. You're chasing down money or chasing down compensation." Again, it's that sort of inherent racism that we have to stamp out.

I come back to this idea of the indigenous cultural competency training. Every person in the Ontario public service—whether it's a janitor, a deputy minister, a minister, everybody in between—all approximately 60,000 public servants and anyone employed in the Ontario public service will take this cultural competency training. It's a computer program, an online program and it's interactive.

I know that many of us are doing it. I'm about three quarters of the way through it. It takes a number of hours. Even when I went through it and started looking at some the comments and questions when you go into the online program that raise questions about your own assumptions, it is really surprising how subtle racism can be. I think one of the great things that the government has done is this cultural competency training that I know we are all looking forward to.

In closing, I want to reiterate again, from the indigenous relations point of view, that the program, the three-year anti-racism strategic plan, A Better Way Forward, was informed by 10 public meetings in all four regions of the province.

What is particularly important here is that submissions to the Anti-Racism Directorate that the minister particularly asked for included indigenous representatives at those meetings who put forward their points of view, their issues, drew attention to the subtleties of this inherent racism, and made suggestions on how it can be dealt with.

Thank you, Speaker. I'm going to share the remainder of my time with the Minister of Transportation.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I recognize the Minister of Transportation.

Hon. Steven Del Duca: I'm very happy to have a chance this afternoon to be here with colleagues and members from across the aisle—and of course, with you as well, Speaker—to add my contribution to the debate around Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures.

I know there has been significant debate on this particular legislation over the course of today and at other points in time. I guess I would start by referencing that I believe, and I'm quite certain that every member in this House believes as well, that the minister who is responsible for this legislation, the minister responsible for the Anti-Racism Directorate, has done some incredible work with respect to putting this legislation together and bringing it forward. It is, in many respects, unprecedented legislation. It's a very clear indication of how that minister, our Premier and our government feel extremely passionate about this particular issue, this particular topic.

I would also say that we've heard here today in the Legislature from members in both opposition parties who

feel a similar passion with respect to making sure that we get this legislation right, that we strike the right balance and that we find creative ways to work together to move the province forward on issues relating to equality, on issues relating to all of those things that matter to the people who I'm very proud to represent in my community of Vaughan, which I know would be held, with respect to the values, in similar ways by people who live in every corner of this province.

I wanted to say right off the top to that minister, the minister responsible for the Anti-Racism Directorate, the minister who is also responsible for children and youth services, that he has done fantastic work. It's not surprising that he would have been able to put together this legislation, not only because of his enthusiasm and his own particular hard-working approach to these kinds of initiatives.

But to go through some of the work that was undertaken by that minister and his team with respect to the consultations that occurred right across the province—I know it has been mentioned here, but I think it bears repeating that since its establishment, the Anti-Racism Directorate has held 10 open, public meetings between July and December 2016. Through social media, through conversations with that minister and other colleagues of ours who had the opportunity to attend a number of the meetings that took place, the turnout was phenomenal. We literally saw hundreds and hundreds of Ontarians from every different community, from every different aspect of the incredible fabric that works together to make this province of ours so extraordinary. Literally more than 2,500 people attended the Anti-Racism Directorate public meetings between July and December 2016, in Toronto, Hamilton, Mississauga, Scarborough, Sudbury, Kitchener, London, Thunder Bay, Windsor and Ottawa, and an additional more than 2,000 participated in the public meetings via live-streaming online.

I will say, as the Minister of Transportation, someone who has had the opportunity to be in this portfolio for close to the last three years—I've done town hall meetings myself on the issue of transportation, and in many communities the turnout has been considerable—that I'm actually literally blown away by the exceedingly large turnout numbers we saw with respect to the public consultations, the feedback that we received, that helped to create Bill 114. This literally, and understandably, brought hundreds and hundreds of Ontarians out, because there is such interest and there is such passion in making sure that we get this right in this bill.

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I know that others have talked at length about some of the elements of the bill. I think it's also important for us to take into account, when we move forward with legislation, that we learn from some of the unfortunate—I'll use the term "mistakes," Speaker—circumstances that have given rise to the need for this legislation.

I don't think there is anybody in this chamber—I sincerely would like to believe that's the case—that doesn't want us to move forward in this particular direc-

tion, but we have to remember—this is not a partisan comment: I recognize that governments are not perfect. I don't think the people that we represent expect their governments to be perfect. But we have to take great care to make sure that as we move forward, particularly in the global environment that we find ourselves in right now, where people from right around the world seem to feel an increased freedom or an increased licence to perhaps lash out and behave in ways that just a few years ago we wouldn't necessarily have found to be particularly acceptable—maybe that's the advent of social media. Maybe it's something else, some other phenomenon that none of us knows or can point to specifically.

I think, particularly in the context in which we find ourselves today, we have to remember that we cannot afford on these issues to go backwards. We cannot afford to do things in a way that wouldn't keep moving these issues forward in a manner that's consistent with the values held by the people of Ontario.

We find ourselves in a position today to move forward because a number of years ago the people of this province saw the Anti-Racism Directorate dismantled by a former government, and in that case it was the Conservative government. This is not a partisan comment, because governments aren't expected necessarily to be perfect. I point that out just to say that, as we go forward with Bill 114, as we go forward hopefully to pass this legislation—and I expect and I certainly hope that we will—we have to take great care so as not to repeat mistakes that perhaps Legislatures and other governments have made in the past; I just wanted to point that out.

Now, I know that the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation spoke at length about some of the particular elements of the bill, and I don't want to necessarily repeat because that minister always does a fantastic job of speaking in a very eloquent way and articulating in this case the provisions of this bill that would help with respect to lifting up our First Nations in this province, which I think is great news and everybody here would support.

With some of my remaining time I would only point out that—I say this often when I have the chance to participate in debate in the Legislature. Many who are here will know that I have a couple of young children at home. My daughters are nine and five. Actually, just in a few days our five-year-old will turn six. When I think about all of the initiatives that we are undertaking—not just as a Liberal government but as parliamentarians—whether it's coming via government policy or whether it's coming through private members' business or flowing from opposition members, we are all involved in this phenomenal enterprise of helping to build a province up.

We may have challenges and we may have points of disagreement between the three parties because of our own philosophical moorings or our foundations. We may have points of disagreement around whether building a highway in a particular location, putting up traffic lights

in another community, building transit in a particular community in a certain way, using one transit technology versus another, balancing a budget in one year versus another year, building 100,000 child care spaces perhaps versus building fewer, building a school in a particular way, using a delivery model for procurement.

Speaker, these are all very understandable points of disagreement as it relates to policy. Of course, I'm a very proud Liberal and a very proud Liberal MPP. We on this side have a very particular perspective around how to move forward on these important policies. I think that we see evidence of that in a number of the initiatives that our Premier and our team have brought forward over the last four years, and in fact over the last 14 years with a number of the initiatives that we brought forward.

But where I would like to believe, and I sincerely in my heart of hearts do believe, that there is no significant room for disagreement—again, I'm thinking of my daughters, thinking of the pages, thinking of the tens of thousands of young women and men who live in every corner of this province and who have an expectation of us that we will find ways to work together on legislation, particularly legislation that, when you look at it, truly embodies the values that are right at the heart of what a province or what a country is supposed to be about, because they're infused with values that I believe as Ontarians we all hold equally and we all hold dearly.

This is legislation that I believe should move forward. It is of critical importance. When my nine-year-old and my soon-to-be-six-year-old are of voting age, when they're in their forties, like I am now, I think that they will look back to this particular moment and will understand that people in this chamber, the 107 of us, came together and moved forward with legislation like Bill 114 because we had an expectation and a desire to build a more inclusive and fairer society for the people of Ontario.

I would call on members in all three caucuses to support Bill 114, to work with our Premier and our government to build the kind of province that I know my daughters and others like them deserve for many, many years to come. I look forward to the discussion on this legislation over the course of the rest of the debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Toby Barrett: I appreciate the opportunity to comment following the speech of Minister Zimmer, the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. He addressed the Truth and Reconciliation report and also talked at great length about the strategy that's proposed in Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures.

With respect to the strategy that will be mandated by this particular bill, it's a strategy document entitled A Better Way Forward: Ontario's 3-year Anti-Racism Strategic Plan. It was published on March 7, 2017. It's available online and we certainly encourage all to read the strategy. It would be a more detailed read than the legislation itself.

We've all seen systemic discrimination within our indigenous communities. In my area, I'm next door to

both New Credit and Six Nations. This kind of discrimination is clearly unacceptable. We support any measures to condemn racial hatred and violence.

With that being said, the bill before us does have room for improvement. That's why it will go to committee. I look forward to getting more information during this debate to see what members opposite have to say. I hope there will be plenty of opportunities for the public to feed into this debate, and I'm certainly looking forward to what should be substantive public hearings.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions or comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's interesting to hear the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation talk about the issue of stereotyping going forward, because there's this very problematic history of stereotyping—and racial profiling; that's another word that I would use going forward.

The mandatory training of MPs and MPPs on the Truth and Reconciliation report is so needed. As a caucus, we recently went through some anti-oppression training. That's why I referenced the position that I speak from, which is a position of privilege as being a white woman in the province of Ontario. But I must tell you, Senator Beyak should have got some training before she issued very harsh, critical, racist comments about the indigenous community in this country.

I will also say that one of the main recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation report—which I have favoured and about which I've put a question on the order paper to the Minister of Education—has to do with education. I will quote a First Nations chief, Obomsawin, who said that she was appalled by how Canadian history was taught: "I had recognized that it was really designed to create hate towards our people."

I will tell you, as a mother of a 16-year-old daughter who's in the education system in grade 10 and learning about the history of this country and this province, because we've talked about this at home, that she's not getting the full picture. She's not getting the full picture of our history and how we have dealt with indigenous communities. I will tell you that today's youth are hungry for the truth, and they deserve it. It needs to be reflected in our curriculum. If we can get that part going and accelerate that piece, we will be a stronger province going forward.

1700

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: The proposed Anti-Racism Act is the first of its kind in Canada, and I'm proud to say that I definitely agree with all of the members who have spoken about children and youth. I think that should be our focus when we look at legislation like this, so that, going forward, we can teach our youth how to live in a diverse society and the importance of learning about other cultures and other religions, so that we can live together in a harmonious way, and so that kids know that there is no acceptance of any form of racism or prejudice

against their friends. They will grow up in a better society as a whole because they know these things. This goes to show that we are intolerant towards any form of racism in our province. I think that this legislation is going to make our whole province a better province, especially for our youth. Our youth are so important.

Coming from a school board, I know how hard it is when kids fight with each other because of racial issues that they may face, and how parents can become involved in these battles. We want to teach them right from the start that it's important for kids not to worry about the colour of somebody's skin or what somebody may be eating or why it's different than what they may be doing. I think that we need to build on this, and we need to set an example as adults. As adults, we need to be able to show kids that there is no tolerance for any of this.

I think that this legislation is going to do just that. It's a foundation of transparency. There is going to be a great deal of consultation. It's being embedded in the law, so that it can't be changed unless repealed. This is going to be a strong piece of legislation that shapes the future of our province, and I'm proud to speak to it today. I have been listening to all of the comments from all of our colleagues on either side, and I think that everybody is in agreement that there is no room for racism or prejudice here in our province. This piece of legislation will better this province.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm very proud to rise on behalf of my residents in Stormont–Dundas–South Glengarry to talk for just a minute on the response to Bill 114, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures.

I mentioned before the history that we have here in our country the blemishes of racism. It's a huge waste of economic talent, and it's a huge source, if you look back over our history, of problems. We are very much a province that's proud of giving our children the ability to do as well as they can, and this can be, certainly in our history, a huge problem for many people, especially new people coming to this province. It's time we put a stop to this. I think all three parties are in agreement with it.

I know that the member from Nepean–Carleton had a number of good points to make on how to improve this bill. We need to get on with it. This is something where, since we all agree, we should just move ahead with the bill. We're looking forward to it going to committee, and we want to make sure that when it goes to committee, we have the ability to listen to various groups. I know that with the putting children first act, we had a restriction on how many people could come to the House to speak. I think it's important that we actually listen. The party opposite had all its amendments in before we even sat down with the first deputation. But I think it behooves us to actually listen to what people are saying, listen to some of the issues they've had, and look at different ways of solving these problems. Whatever race or creed is out there, it's up to us to solve these problems. I look forward to giving everybody the opportunity they deserve.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. The Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation can reply.

Hon. David Zimmer: I would like to thank the member for Vaughan, the Minister of Transportation, and the members for Halton-Norfolk, Kitchener-Waterloo and Brampton-Springdale for their very sensitive comments.

A couple of weeks ago, while I was reading through this strategy, I was also reading some other materials in support of it, and I came across an autobiography of a person who was in their mid-eighties at the time they wrote the autobiography. They had experienced stereotyping and racism all their lives. The author made this observation in writing, and I want to quote from the words, which were a reflection on a past life lived in the context of racism and stereotyping and all those bad things that we've been talking about.

The author—it was a man—said, “Mine has been a wasted life, full of degradation, muted feelings and especially not belonging.” Not belonging—that was his experience that he reflected upon in his mid-eighties. I read on in the biography, and there were poignant comments and descriptions of what had transpired at various stages in his life.

I think all of the members here are in the right place when we all recognize on an absolutely nonpartisan basis that this strategy is something that we want to discuss, that we want to see in action, and we are all looking for results, good results, in a way that will tackle this issue of stereotyping and racism.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Further debate? The member for Perth-Wellington.

Hon. David Zimmer: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order, the Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation.

Hon. David Zimmer: I forgot to thank the member from Stormont-Dundas-South Glengarry for his comments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thank you.

Further debate?

Mr. Norm Miller: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): The member for Parry Sound-Muskoka.

Mr. Norm Miller: I believe you will find we have unanimous consent to put forward a motion without notice regarding allowing the city of Mississauga to present at public hearings on Bill 68, An Act to amend various Acts in relation to municipalities.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Is there unanimous consent of the House to allow the city of Mississauga to make a presentation at standing committee?

Interjections.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I heard some noes.

The member for Perth-Wellington has the floor again.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Thank you, Speaker.

It gives me great pleasure to speak on behalf of Patrick Brown and the PC caucus regarding anti-racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim bigotry and, of course, the systemic discrimination of Ontario's indigenous population.

Hate is hate, Speaker. Our party has said that many times. Hate of all kinds needs to be condemned, whether it is vandalism, violence, or even the subtle digs and/or strange looks that those who are racialized experience. I can tell you that I have seen, in recent events, proof that hate of all forms exists.

I believe I've told the House on different occasions that I was born and raised in Essex county, just south of Windsor, Ontario, and grew up down there. I went to high school down there. We were just across the river from Detroit. We went to school with boys and girls of the black race, and we didn't seem to have some of these problems that we are talking about here today. As children, if we had issues, we settled them ourselves, whether it was outside at school or—and sometimes it got a little rough, but we settled our disputes ourselves and we got along quite famously.

But I look back to the 1950s and 1960s, and I'm old enough to remember some of these things. Most of our television came from Detroit and we were watching what was going on in the United States. It wasn't nice. It was terrible. The black people were being treated terribly. They were segregated. They couldn't go to white schools; they couldn't go into restaurants that white people used. They couldn't travel on a bus unless it was at the back.

I never really understood why that was going on, because I was just a young fellow and, like I say, we didn't have those experiences, that I can remember, where I was born and raised. It came to a head in Selma, Alabama, and they had terrible race riots down there. Then Martin Luther King started speaking out. We saw some of his broadcasts—very passionate—that we are all equal and it wasn't fair what was going on in the United States at that time. He met much resistance.

1710

I believe some of that resistance was based on fear. The white population feared—I don't know why, but they feared that they were being taken over by the black race, but they weren't. The black race just wanted a fair shake. They just wanted to be able to prosper and grow up as anybody else would.

I do study history a bit. I'm mostly interested in military history of the 20th century. I saw a program on television one night. It was about the Tuskegee Airmen. Anybody who has seen this documentary—it's quite interesting. The Tuskegee Airmen were a black squadron of fighter pilots. They were formed during World War II. The powers that be in the army air corps at that time were hoping they were all going to fail. They didn't believe that the black airmen had the qualifications or the will to fight that the white population was supposed to have. But they succeeded. They succeeded in that they were able to form a squadron—and they were stationed in Italy. Their purpose was to guard the bombers that were flying into

Germany and other parts of the Third Reich bombing missions, because they were being shot down at a terrible rate. So they gave the Tuskegee Airmen the job of protecting the American bombers, and they did very well at it. They were tenacious, they were great fighter pilots. They gave them proper airplanes to use; they flew Mustangs at that time.

Their reputation was quite renowned, but only in the black communities. It wasn't until a bomber crash-landed in Rimini, Italy, where these airmen were stationed—the pilots got out of this bomber, they were all okay—and that was the first time they realized they were being protected by a black squadron. They got along famously, they got along as comrades in arms should, and that's generally what happened in World War II and in previous wars and wars since. Once you're under fire, once you're in battle, you fight for your fellow soldier and try to protect him as much as he would protect you. There were about 200 of these pilots that were killed over there, so they were in the thick of battle.

One of the saddest parts of the story is when they came home. A lot of these soldiers and airmen came home in the same boat. They sailed into New York harbour, they went by the Statue of Liberty. When they got off the boat, they started disembarking, and it was black folks this way, white folks this way. The black pilots were devastated, because they thought, they had fought this war together, they lost many people. They thought maybe it was over with—the discrimination—but it wasn't. They were not allowed to go to any of the parties that the white folks were at. It was very devastating to these people.

I guess what I'm trying to get at here is this business of anti-racism has been here for a long time. It's been something that's festering and has festered for a long time. We do see, certainly, in some parts of the world, that people are getting along better than they used to, especially in the United States, I think we can say that—where you look at the armed forces in the United States, they're fully integrated, everybody has a chance of doing the same job if they qualify for it, and that's gratifying.

I want to go back, actually, to 1967, when my father and mother bought the dairy farms up by Monkton, Ontario. That was the year of the riots in Detroit—1967. It was in July of 1967. Across the river, where we were on the Canadian side, you could hear the gunfire. You could see the fires burning. It was quite a devastating time. Again, this race business festered. It was terrible, just terrible.

Now we get up to modern times, and it's still here. Why is racism still here? I'm not a scholar; I'm not smart enough to give you all the reasons. You would think, from lessons learned in the past, that we should, as a society, be able to condemn this and be able to get rid of it, but it's still here.

We have this bill presented to us, An Act to provide for Anti-Racism Measures. Really, it's a bill that tries to address the situation that is happening right now. It's really too bad that it has to be introduced, because you

would think that in a modern society, as we are in, we wouldn't have to. We shouldn't have to deal with this type of thing.

The MPP from Thornhill introduced into the Legislature a motion to reject BDS, the BDS movement, which was an important gesture to Ontario's vibrant Jewish community. Why do we have to do those things? We shouldn't have to do them, but we do.

MPP Todd Smith crafted the Ontario Tamil Heritage Month bill.

Of course, you, sir, were responsible for the Emancipation Day Act, recognizing Ontario's role in helping the enslaved and the oppressed.

Even Mr. Shurman was successful in the Legislature at condemning Israeli Apartheid Week.

I don't want to just stand here and say that I've seen it all, because I haven't, but I think I've been around enough to wonder why people have to do these things. We see what is going on over in Syria right now—race hatred for each other.

In Perth-Wellington, in my own community of Stratford, which is the largest city that we have in the riding, we have welcomed people from other countries. I'm proud to say that there hasn't been as much racism—that I have heard of—in our community.

We actually have a group that gets together once or twice a month. There's a couple of hundred of them, and they come from all different backgrounds, all different races. Geza Wordofa is the fellow who put this together. He's from Ethiopia. He was educated in Russia and received his university degrees in Russia, and then immigrated to Canada. He actually worked for the United Nations at one point.

I believe he told me he had about 250 people involved, and they're people from Spanish-speaking countries, Muslim communities, and different countries from around the world. His work is to get them settled in our area, to try to help them find work, and help them with the language, of course, but also, he has cultural events where they all get together. I've been to them a couple of times. One time, he'll have, say, the Muslim community get together. You eat the food that they eat from whatever countries they're from. The next time, you'll have Polynesian people, Filipino people, and they'll bring their food. It's kind of interesting to see these things.

But they all want one thing: They all want to live in this country, and they all want to get along. I believe that most of Ontario certainly wants that to happen too.

I think that as legislators, certainly if there's this problem out there—and there is—we have to deal with it. We have to try to bring forth the best legislation we can and be fair to everybody.

1720

You would know, Mr. Speaker, that if someone or some group deems that this isn't fair to them, then we will have difficulties getting it passed or getting them to agree with what we are trying to do.

I went to a number of Vimy Ridge celebrations, remembrance ceremonies, this weekend. It was interesting,

some of the pictures I saw of different cultures that fought with the Canadian troops in World War I in different ways. It brought a lot of people together who, today in Ontario, we see being discriminated against, and that's too bad.

It shouldn't be happening. We can't afford it. It's hard on your economy, because if children of a certain race are not feeling welcome, then they don't do good in school. They probably won't get the jobs that they're after, or won't have the opportunities to get these jobs because they're discouraged. They have a feeling that they're not wanted sometimes.

Toronto has such a diverse community. Ontario can't afford to let this happen. They bring so much to the culture—and not only culture, but they bring so much to Ontario as far as being able to help our economy. They want to work, and they want to work hard, because they came from places where the best conditions weren't there for a long life.

It is very heartbreakingly to hear the stories that some of these people have had to endure in the countries they've come from. But they get over here, and it's like the land of opportunity for them. They want to work; they want to play; they want to be safe. Part of being safe is certainly not having to undergo any kind of racial discrimination.

Speaker, I believe I've come to the end of my talk here.

I think that there are certainly good and bad parts, and parts of the bill that maybe need improvement. I would ask that the government consider in committee that the plan does not focus only on the black, indigenous and Muslim communities. It focuses on that, but it is very weak on protections for the Ontario Jewish population, which both the 2011 census and the Toronto police hate crimes unit say is the community which is the most targeted by hate in the province. Anti-Semitism runs deep and should be acknowledged along with the other targeted groups in a similar vein in the three-year plan.

The three-year plan also mentions specific tables for certain communities and changes to our education system which are not explicitly mentioned in the legislation and, again, which exclude Ontario's Jewish community.

Finally, there is a concern with the privacy measures outlined throughout the bill itself. With the collection of private information on race-based incidents, the government must take great care to ensure there aren't privacy breaches. The Ontario PC caucus is most interested in learning how the government intends to protect from these breaches.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Catherine Fife: It's a pleasure to follow and comment on the member from Perth–Wellington, who gave his context, growing up so close to Detroit and bearing witness to racist practices and policies in the United States, and having that affect Windsor.

I will tell you that a couple of times, there's a statement of "if we need this." I think that we all agree that this legislation is needed.

I will tell you that just two and a half weeks ago, there was a white supremacist, white pride rally held in Peterborough, Ontario. The Canadian Nationalist Front was there. Of course, they believe that all people of colour should be deported from Canada. This was a small group of men who rallied in contrast to an Islam awareness talk. I was so proud to see some of the community stand up against that hatred and focus on the safety.

Following that story in the Peterborough Examiner, there was a columnist, a woman by the name of Kelly McDowell, who wrote that "Racism is All Around Us." But she was almost relieved to see this visual of white supremacy, because she experiences it each and every day, and she says, "It has come out of hiding"—racism—"so ... now we can start having some real conversations" and address the practices and address the inequities.

She goes on to say, "Our economy, political system"—for sure our political system—"and culture, in general, have been founded on racist practices," and that, by default, we are all implicated.

She goes on: "This difficult work is what is before each and every one of us. With patience and compassion, we must" go forward.

I raise this issue of what happened in Peterborough because it's right there under the surface, and we have to be honest about it in this province in order to address the issue of racism.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Ms. Harinder Malhi: I've noticed that all of our colleagues from across the aisle have talked about their personal experiences in the last little bit, so I'm going to talk a little bit about a personal experience as well when it comes to being from a racialized community. I want to talk a little bit about a story that my dad always tells us.

When he was first elected to the House of Commons in 1993, he says, he was standing by the eternal flame one day, and somebody came up to him and said, "Where's your taxi today?" He looked at them. He says, "I just looked. I stood there for a minute and I thought to myself, 'Is this man really insinuating that just because I'm a turbaned Sikh and I'm standing in front of the eternal flame, I'm here to drive a cab and to drive people around?'" He said, "You know, I didn't even have the energy to answer that. I turned around and I said to them, 'Oh, I'm off today.'" And he said, "I laughed and I walked away, because I had become so used to this ignorance." He goes, "I knew where I had come and where I had come from. It was a matter of pride for me to be who I was, but it didn't matter whether or not somebody recognized it."

It's sad to see that that was the type of ignorance, that less than 20 years ago, this was what people thought. They marginalized a group of people to be a taxi driver, to be in the trucking community. And do you know what? I would honestly say that it's hard work. We should believe in hard work and the ethic of hard work regardless of what somebody does. It shouldn't be a sign of disrespect to say that this is what you do for a living.

Anybody who earns a hard day's living should be proud of what they do.

I want to say that racism impacts us all. It impacts all of our lives in some way or form, and I'm so glad that this piece of legislation is on the floor today, because we're going to work together to make our province a better place to live.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Jim McDonell: I'm happy to respond to the words by our member from Perth–Wellington. He talked about some of the issues that this bill addresses but maybe they don't have to address anymore. I'm going to elaborate on that.

In Glengarry county, we are a county that was settled essentially from Scotland. But we had something a little bit different in the fact that the majority of the settlers that came were Catholic, which was unusual because it was illegal to be of the Catholic religion in Scotland at the time. But it was a reward for fighting beside the British.

So there was that animosity between the two, and some battles. But over the 200 years, when you're living side by side and you are forced to survive, it brings people together. Certainly it did that, although I remember my mother talking about that generation, and there was still a little bit of it.

But I give this one example: In one community, they used to have an Orange parade every year. One year back in, I guess, the 1920s, it was led by a priest who was playing the pipes. Of course, that raised some eyebrows, as you can imagine. And one of the members who was organizing it said, "You know, he was good enough in the trenches to help our boys. He is good enough today to lead our parade." It shows how you can get over some of these prejudices. But it sometimes takes a long time, far too long.

Of course, over our history, if you go back into northern Europe, many, many battles were fought, and it takes a long time to forget. But let's not have this be a trademark of our province. Let's move ahead and let's make sure that we utilize and allow everybody in this province to do as well as they can, and help out those who are in need.

1730

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Questions and comments?

Mr. Paul Miller: Speaker, I'd like to take a bit of a different approach to this whole discussion. I'd like to bring attention to the fact that the media and movies have played a huge role in bringing forth racism and bringing forth how to deal with racism.

I'll give you some examples of, as I grew up and as an adult, some of the shows I remember: Roots, Gandhi, Mandela, Martin Luther King—Gene Roddenberry, with his diverse team of people on Star Trek, on the actual show and on his crew.

I'd also like to bring forth one that started it all. It was way ahead of its time, not expected, and it was very, very

controversial at the time: All in the Family. But it showed Americans how racism existed. They tried to do it in a humorous way, but the underlying message was there, and people understood what the real message was—most people, not all.

I commend Hollywood for tackling these tough issues over the years. They may have been controversial, but most of those shows that I mentioned, and many more I could mention, hit box office records. So people care. People want to be exposed to it. People want to know where they are going wrong. I think Hollywood, TIFF and all the other organizations that show these shows bring it to the forefront, because the media plays a huge role in anything, wars or anything, in the way they report.

But what I've got to say is, those people have to be responsible. They have to do true reporting. They have to do their research, and they have to bring it forward with honesty and integrity in their reporting.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): That concludes our questions and comments. The member for Perth–Wellington can respond.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I want to thank the members from Kitchener–Waterloo, Brampton–Springdale, Stor-mont–Dundas–South Glengarry and Hamilton East–Stoney Creek for their comments.

I've never been the subject of this type of thing, and I guess I've been lucky. I guess it's mostly because of the colour of my skin, and that's unfortunate. It's too bad. We should not tolerate this type of behaviour. Like I said before, hate is hate, and it has to be dealt with sternly. We need to put legislation forward that is going to address this and deal with it.

We live in a great country. I believe Canada is either number 1, 2 or 3—I forget what the number is—for people wanting to come here to live, because of our democracy and the way that we are able to make a living. If you work hard, you can do that and give your family a better way of life.

I spoke about a chap in Stratford who has put together a multicultural association to help new immigrants to the country. He said it's really nice to be able to go out and vote and not be afraid, and it's really nice to walk down the street and not fear being shot at, but we also have to work on our differences and accept our differences, and it will certainly help us live our lives to the fullest. That's probably one thing I can see in this country that is festering a little bit, and we need to address that issue.

Thank you, Speaker.

Mr. John Vanthof: Point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Point of order: the member for Timiskaming–Cochrane.

Mr. John Vanthof: I seek unanimous consent for the Standing Committee on Social Policy to sit an additional day for hearings for Bill 68—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Sorry. I'm advised that I have to stop you now. You have to seek unanimous consent to move a motion.

Mr. John Vanthof: Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to move a motion for the standing committee.

Interjection.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): I want to hear what the member has to say. What is the request?

Mr. John Vanthof: I seek for the Standing Committee on Social Policy to sit an additional day for hearings for Bill 68, Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, 2017—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Got it, got it.

The member for Timiskaming—Cochrane is seeking the unanimous consent of the House to sit an additional day to deal with Bill 68.

Agreed? I heard some noes.

Further debate?

Ms. Cindy Forster: It gives me great pleasure to get up and bring a few words to Bill 114, the Anti-Racism Act. I think it has been a long time coming. Certainly, back in 1991, I think, under the NDP government, that was originally when the Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat was introduced.

I was thinking about what I was going to talk about, beyond my constituency experiences. In the work that I did over the years with the Ontario Nurses' Association, some things changed greatly around racialized people, and some things haven't changed very much.

I'll use a couple of examples. For many years, I did organizing of nurses into the Ontario Nurses' Association, into a union. Depending on where you were doing that work—I worked across the province. In Toronto, in an organizing drive, you would see many racialized nurses coming together to join a union and participate in an organizing drive. But I will use McMaster in Hamilton—it was probably 20 years ago that we organized that hospital. I think there were 800 nurses eligible to vote. I was at McMaster on that day for the entire 12 or 14 hours of the vote. There were only a handful of nurses—I would say 80% of them showed up for that vote, but only a handful were not white-skinned—in Hamilton, just 70 kilometres away from downtown Toronto, where you would see, in a vote here, perhaps, the exact opposite.

I remember, in my early days of nursing—as will the Minister of Natural Resources—working in smaller communities, that the vast majority of racialized nurses would have been Filipino. Many Filipino nurses came to Canada and worked in the hospitals for the most part. Even then, 40 years ago, there was a struggle with the way some of those nurses were treated. Fortunately, they worked in a unionized environment for the most part, and they had a voice when those kinds of issues happened.

This last year, I had a lot of interaction with the not-for-profit Saint Elizabeth, in a home care setting, and met a number of personal support workers, registered nurses and RPNs over the last year. Some of them expressed to me that racism is still alive, even in health care. Some of them experienced that from their patients, their clients and their families, in people's homes and going out into retirement homes, where they're supporting people with personal care. They are still experiencing that today, even though there have been a lot of awareness campaigns and a lot of work done in many communities.

I think it depends on where you live in the province as well. Where I live, for many, many years, the vast majority of people who lived in my riding—Welland, Port Colborne, Thorold, Wainfleet—probably 95% of the people were white-skinned. When we started to become quite multicultural, and people started to arrive from Somalia and Mexico and Haiti, you certainly had to do some work in the communities to start to have some acceptance and some integration there.

1740

I wanted to speak about some of the issues that have recently happened in my community, which I think are important for people to hear. I think it was in March or maybe February that we had a break-in in my community of Port Colborne. Port Colborne is a small community of only about 20,000 people. It happened in broad daylight and over the course of 45 minutes. There was a family, the Benner family—this is all public knowledge—who live on a small farm just outside of Port Colborne, which is near the Welland Canal on Lake Erie, in the Niagara region, about 150 kilometres south of Toronto. It's a long, unpaved laneway up to the Benner house.

At first, the father, Tim, thought that it was just a regular break-in in the middle of the day, when nobody was home, but when he went in he found his furniture trashed, his computers stolen and his walls spray-painted. Three hours into a police investigation, officers alerted him to a message written on the wall of his daughter Ruby's room. Ruby is, I think, 16 years old, a high school student. Someone had spray painted "N-word lover" in large letters.

The family was just devastated by this. They were so shaken up. They recounted stories of the immediate shock afterward, where they simply just sat on the bed and cried together as a family. They weren't even sure whether they should show their daughter the messages, but eventually they realized that it needed to be brought out and brought forward to let the children and to let the community know that this was happening and that it wasn't right.

Worse, they knew that it was someone who knew their family and, specifically, someone who knew the daughter Ruby. Now, Ruby happened to be dating a young black boy, who was 16 as well. His name is Jayden. They were both grade 10 students at Lakeshore Catholic High School, and they had been dating for about six months.

When talking to the media about how they were coping, Jayden, the young man, said, "Some nights, she's crying and I'm just trying to say it's all right." But, despite this, Jayden still hopes, he proceeded to say: "I just think to myself not everyone is racist or not everyone thinks of me different, or her, because she's dating a different colour."

The truth is, it's hard not to think about how this incident will forever change and affect young people's futures.

Jayden had been experiencing racism. He played hockey in the community. Even at hockey games and at practices, he was experiencing harassment, but he hadn't

told anyone about it. He'd been experiencing it from parents of other hockey players, calling him names on the ice if he happened to score or if he happened to get a puck off of some other kid. He was experiencing this, but he was just kind of brushing it off. And then this incident happened.

His mom, Shannon Hannigan, described how Jayden no longer wanted to go to school, he didn't want to play hockey, and he didn't even want to leave the house anymore. And, really, that's not fair to a child who really should only be concerned about what he's going to do on a Friday night. Shannon, the mother, was worried that they've robbed her family and that they've robbed her child of his innocence, which can never be restored.

She's right, and that's why we actually need some legislation here in the province of Ontario. We need investments in our social programming to educate, to collect data, to understand where the gaps are and how to fill them to make sure that stories like Jayden and Ruby's never happen again.

Niagara regional police were very quick to call it a hate crime. In 2016, Niagara regional police reported that there were 10 similar cases in the Niagara region. We only have about 450,000 to 480,000 people in Niagara, and not one of these cases has actually resulted in any charges. That really makes it difficult for families and for individuals to accept: that these hate crimes are actually going on, but the police are unable to lay charges because they can't find out who the people actually are.

Charges and convictions for hate crimes are rare for a number of reasons. Studies show that the police many times aren't effectively trained on what to look for, and, according to more studies, hate crimes are almost always a matter of interpretation. They're difficult to argue in court in terms of the burden of proof required for any convictions.

In Niagara, we have a great anti-racism coalition called the Niagara AntiRacism Coalition. Earlier this month, around this incident of the Benners and the Hannigans, within a very short period of time—I would say it was just a matter of a couple of days—this coalition actually pulled together hundreds of students, parents and teachers, who all came out to the Guild Hall in my riding, in Port Colborne, to support both of the families and to send a loud message out to the community that this was unacceptable, that it wasn't going to be tolerated. Hopefully, we've not seen any more incidents there in Port Colborne at this point.

It was organized by the Niagara AntiRacism Coalition, an initiative started, actually, by one of my part-time staff in her spare time and a group of dedicated local organizers. But it is a reminder that you can get 400 people out to a rally through social media and a little reporting in the local newspaper; that people really do care about this issue and they want their community to be supportive. And it's a reminder that, despite the bigotry and the racism, communities will come together, they will support each other, they will stand up; they will send a loud message that it's unacceptable and it will not be tolerated.

Many described it as an act of hatred that turned into an act of kindness and community solidarity and support.

I just wanted to do a shout-out to these two young people that their community is supporting them and there are avenues for them to go to if this reoccurs or if they need support in any way.

Ms. Catherine Fife: They're feeling the love here.

Ms. Cindy Forster: Yes, they sure are.

The other thing that happened in my community back a couple of months ago as well was a devastating reminder of the urgent need for this anti-racism legislation, in an incident that occurred in our community and certainly too close to home, involving two young women, Bilkis Al-haddad and Mahabba Ahmed. These two women were in their car and they were headed to the mosque in St. Catharines for Friday afternoon prayer. The two women were each wearing the hijab—a head scarf that covers the hair and the neck—and they were close to the mosque when they watched a 20-something female driver next to them roll down her window, turn in their direction and shout to these two women, "Go back home."

Mahabba is a Canadian-born Muslim, but describes that it's not the first time that she's been on the receiving end of hateful words. What the woman driver and her female passengers could not have known is that Bilkis has already experienced unimaginable pain in her life. Three of her four children—Qamer, Ahmed and Nabil—died in a fire at their home in July 2002. She is still struggling with the death of these three kids, but yet we have these women driving in a car sending hate messages to this woman.

Her only surviving son, Mohammed, who was 12 at the time, escaped the fire by climbing out a window and on to the roof. He is now a political science student at Brock University.

She is a single mother. She works as a personal support worker; she helps the sick and elderly in this province. During her time off, she throws her heart into a charitable organization she started in honour of her three kids. The mission of her foundation is that it helps and supports the youth in the community.

So imagine this woman, who has lost three children in a fire, is able to do this charitable work, go to work every day in a tough job—it's a slug job being a personal support worker; lots of heavy, tiring work. But she still finds time to go out and support the youth in her community. Yet on that day, being visibly Muslim, none of that could have shielded her from the hateful remarks of those women.

The young women did what most Muslims are advised to do. They ignored it; don't engage; confront that ignorance with education. So she did just that. She actually went out and she spearheaded an event designed to promote peace and clear up misconceptions about Islam and Muslims. The name of that event, Je Suis Moi, was taken from the Je Suis Charlie slogan that spread around the world as a message of freedom of speech after 12 people died in a shooting at the French newspaper Charlie Hebdo in Paris. It is a message, "I am me," of

universal peace that's intended not to let the horrific actions of a few tarnish an entire community.

1750

The Al Noor mosque also opened their doors in the last few months, following recent events in my community, in St. Catharines. The mosque itself was built on the values of diversity and acceptance. The entire community represents people from over 25 nationalities. They host open houses. They offer school tours. They collaborate on events with other faith groups in the area, including church visits. During Ramadan, they invited community leaders to breakfast with them at sunset. A few years ago, following an attack on a young woman—once again in Niagara—walking home from the mosque, they responded by mailing out over 1,000 pamphlets across Niagara region dispelling myths about their faith.

This is one or two women going out and doing the work in the community.

The most recent vigil that we attended in Niagara—I'm sure many of you attended those in your communities as well—was around the recent shooting in Quebec City. I had the honour of attending a candlelight vigil at the same mosque in St. Catharines, which saw over 500 people. The government whip will remember we were there and said a few words. The area out in front of city hall was packed with people coming together from all faiths to support and send a message that this would not be tolerated. It, too, was organized by the Niagara AntiRacism Coalition in collaboration with the mosque, and there was an enormous show of support by our communities, which came together at that vigil. We had, I believe, all levels of government represented there, from municipal right up to federal. There was an enormous show of support. We came together not just to mourn the deaths of the people in Quebec City, but to show how united we were, how non-partisan we can be in tragic times like these.

The next day, this mosque in very short order organized a special event for World Hijab Day, inviting community members and friends to come to the mosque to try on a head scarf and even take one away for the day to

wear, if you chose to do so. It was organized as well by the foundation and the Islamic Society of St. Catharines as a way to educate, inform and strengthen friendships and relationships with the community.

Those are just a few of the things that have been happening in the Welland riding, but we also have issues beyond just the issues of racism. We have a number of issues that have come into my office around the LGBTQ community where we've had to call the police in to try to deal with some of these neighbour-to-neighbour issues. Two women moved into a neighbourhood and they were being harassed on a daily basis, as was their son, by a couple of people in the neighbourhood. To date they're still living there—but once again, I don't know how much education police actually get to deal with this. I don't know how much money is in the budget to have an officer specifically assigned to these issues and to perhaps do some training. It can become problematic when people feel like they need to move out of their neighbourhood because they're being harassed in many different ways.

While the bill is good and it's a good step, there are some areas that we think are lacking, and we don't think that it goes far enough. The NDP, our caucus, is actually encouraging the government to have the Ontario Human Rights Commission task the secretariat with an undertaking of broad consultations around this bill. As we look around this room, we don't see many racialized groups. We have a few members.

I think it's very important that we get this right. If we're going to do it, then we need to go out and do consultations, particularly in areas where we know racialized populations live across this province.

I thank you for the opportunity to say a few words.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): Thanks to the member for Welland for her presentation.

Second reading debate deemed adjourned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ted Arnott): It being 6 of the clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 9 a.m.

The House adjourned at 1755.







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McMahon, Hon. / L'hon. Eleanor (LIB)	Burlington	Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport / Ministre du Tourisme, de la Culture et du Sport
McMeekin, Ted (LIB)	Ancaster–Dundas–Flamborough–Westdale	
McNaughton, Monte (PC)	Lambton–Kent–Middlesex	
Milczyn, Peter Z. (LIB)	Etobicoke–Lakeshore	

Member and Party / Député(e) et parti	Constituency / Circonscription	Other responsibilities / Autres responsabilités
Miller, Norm (PC)	Parry Sound–Muskoka	
Miller, Paul (NDP)	Hamilton East–Stoney Creek / Hamilton-Est–Stoney Creek	Third Deputy Chair of the Committee of the Whole House / Troisième vice-président du comité plénier de l'Assemblée législative
Moridi, Hon. / L'hon. Reza (LIB)	Richmond Hill	Minister of Research, Innovation and Science / Ministre de la Recherche, de l'Innovation et des Sciences
Munro, Julia (PC)	York–Simcoe	
Murray, Hon. / L'hon. Glen R. (LIB)	Toronto Centre / Toronto-Centre	Minister of the Environment and Climate Change / Ministre de l'Environnement et de l'Action en matière de changement climatique
Naidoo-Harris, Hon. / L'hon. Indira (LIB)	Halton	Minister of the Status of Women / Ministre de la condition féminine
Naqvi, Hon. / L'hon. Yasir (LIB)	Ottawa Centre / Ottawa-Centre	Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care / Ministre responsable de la Petite enfance et de la Garde d'enfants
Natyshak, Taras (NDP)	Essex	Attorney General / Procureur général
Nicholls, Rick (PC)	Chatham-Kent–Essex	Government House Leader / Leader parlementaire du gouvernement
Oosterhoff, Sam (PC)	Niagara West–Glanbrook / Niagara-Ouest–Glanbrook	
Pettapiece, Randy (PC)	Perth–Wellington	
Potts, Arthur (LIB)	Beaches–East York	
Qaadri, Shafiq (LIB)	Etobicoke North / Etobicoke-Nord	
Rinaldi, Lou (LIB)	Northumberland–Quinte West	
Sandals, Hon. / L'hon. Liz (LIB)	Guelph	President of the Treasury Board / Présidente du Conseil du Trésor
Sattler, Peggy (NDP)	London West / London-Ouest	
Scott, Laurie (PC)	Haliburton–Kawartha Lakes–Brock	
Sergio, Mario (LIB)	York West / York-Ouest	
Singh, Jagmeet (NDP)	Bramalea–Gore–Malton	
Smith, Todd (PC)	Prince Edward–Hastings	
Sousa, Hon. / L'hon. Charles (LIB)	Mississauga South / Mississauga-Sud	Deputy Leader, Recognized Party / Chef adjoint de parti reconnu
Tabuns, Peter (NDP)	Toronto–Danforth	Minister of Finance / Ministre des Finances
Takhar, Harinder S. (LIB)	Mississauga–Erindale	
Taylor, Monique (NDP)	Hamilton Mountain	
Thibeault, Hon. / L'hon. Glenn (LIB)	Sudbury	Minister of Energy / Ministre de l'Énergie
Thompson, Lisa M. (PC)	Huron–Bruce	
Vanthof, John (NDP)	Timiskaming–Cochrane	
Vernile, Daiene (LIB)	Kitchener Centre / Kitchener-Centre	
Walker, Bill (PC)	Bruce–Grey–Owen Sound	
Wilson, Jim (PC)	Simcoe–Grey	Opposition House Leader / Leader parlementaire de l'opposition officielle
Wong, Soo (LIB)	Scarborough–Agincourt	Deputy Speaker / Vice-présidente
Wynne, Hon. / L'hon. Kathleen O. (LIB)	Don Valley West / Don Valley-Ouest	Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs / Ministre des Affaires intergouvernementales
Zimmer, Hon. / L'hon. David (LIB)		Premier / Première ministre
Vacant		Leader, Liberal Party of Ontario / Chef du Parti libéral de l'Ontario
Yakabuski, John (PC)	Renfrew–Nipissing–Pembroke	
Yurek, Jeff (PC)	Elgin–Middlesex–London	
	Willowdale	Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation / Ministre des Relations avec les Autochtones et de la Réconciliation
	Sault Ste. Marie	

**STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
COMITÉS PERMANENTS DE L'ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE**

Standing Committee on Estimates / Comité permanent des budgets des dépenses

Chair / Présidente: Cheri DiNovo
Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Michael Mantha
Bob Delaney, Cheri DiNovo
Joe Dickson, Michael Harris
Sophie Kiwala, Michael Mantha
Peter Z. Milczyn, Arthur Potts
Todd Smith
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs / Comité permanent des finances et des affaires économiques

Chair / Président: Peter Z. Milczyn
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Ann Hoggarth
Yvan Baker, Toby Barrett
Han Dong, Victor Fedeli
Ann Hoggarth, Harinder Malhi
Cristina Martins, Peter Z. Milczyn
John Vanthof
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Eric Rennie

Standing Committee on General Government / Comité permanent des affaires gouvernementales

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Vice-Chair / Vice-président: Granville Anderson
Granville Anderson, Yvan Baker
Mike Colle, Grant Crack
Nathalie Des Rosiers, Lisa Gretzky
Ann Hoggarth, Julia Munro
Lisa M. Thompson
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przezdziecki

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Daiene Vernile
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Wayne Gates, Amrit Mangat
Cristina Martins, Sam Oosterhoff
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Daiene Vernile
Committee Clerk / Greffière: Sylwia Przezdziecki

Standing Committee on Justice Policy / Comité permanent de la justice

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Arthur Potts, Shafiq Qaadri
Monique Taylor, Daiene Vernile
Bill Walker
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Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly / Comité permanent de l'Assemblée législative

Chair / Président: Monte McNaughton
Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Laurie Scott
Robert Bailey, James J. Bradley
Joe Dickson, Sophie Kiwala
Harinder Malhi, Michael Mantha
Monte McNaughton, Laurie Scott
Soo Wong
Committee Clerk / Greffier: William Short

Standing Committee on Public Accounts / Comité permanent des comptes publics

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Vice-Chair / Vice-présidente: Lisa MacLeod
Bob Delaney, Vic Dhillon
Han Dong, John Fraser
Ernie Hardeman, Percy Hatfield
Randy Hillier, Monte Kwinter
Lisa MacLeod
Committee Clerk / Greffier: Katch Koch.

Standing Committee on Regulations and Private Bills / Comité permanent des règlements et des projets de loi d'intérêt privé

Chair / Président: Ted McMeekin
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Standing Committee on Social Policy / Comité permanent de la politique sociale

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Peter Tabuns
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